

THE
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AND THE
COMMONWEALTH



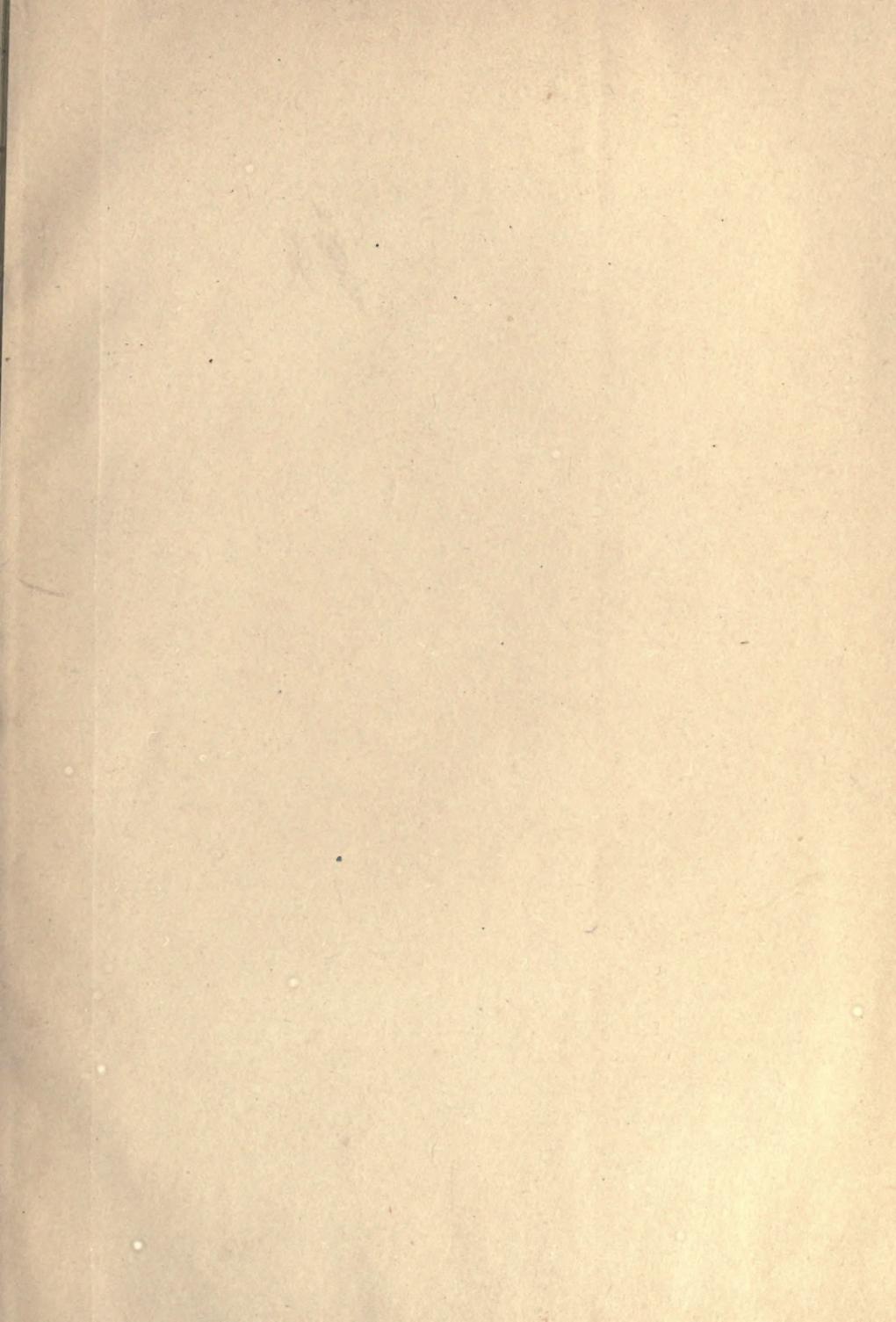
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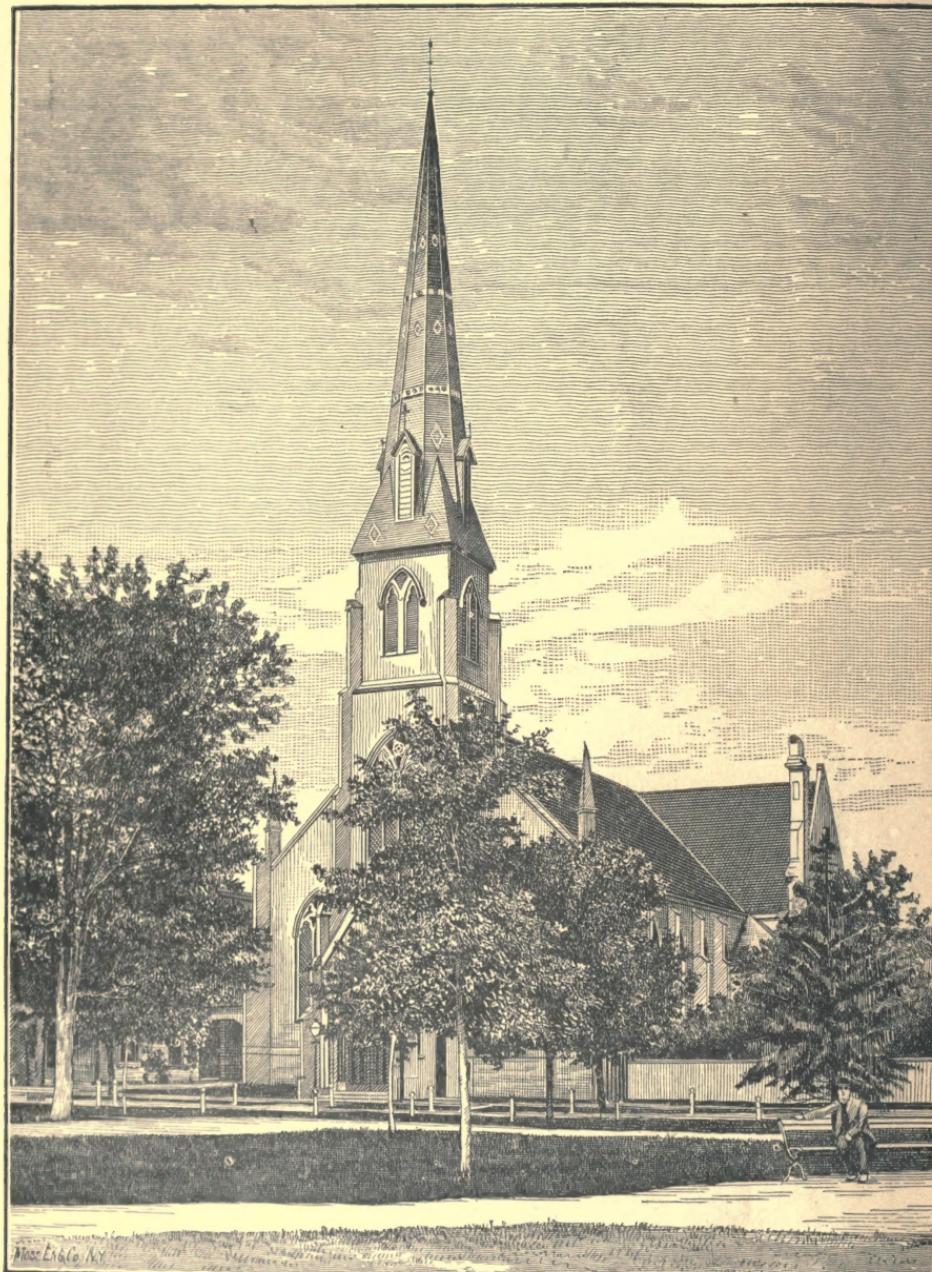
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Zion Presbyterian Church, Brantford, Ontario

THE CHURCH
AND
The COMMONWEALTH,

DISCUSSIONS AND ORATIONS

ON

QUESTIONS OF THE DAY,

(PRACTICAL, BIOGRAPHICAL,
EDUCATIONAL AND DOCTRINAL.)

WRITTEN DURING A TWENTY YEARS MINISTRY

BY THE

REV. WM. COCHRANE, D. D.,
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*Author of "Future Punishment, or Does Death End Probation,"
"Christ and Christian Life," "The Heavenly Vision,"
"Warning and Welcome," &c., &c.*

WITH NUMEROUS & APPROPRIATE ILLUSTRATIONS.

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Publishers' Preface.



INTRODUCING another book to the public, by the Rev. Dr. Cochrane, whose work on "Future Punishment" has met with such approval, the Publishers would simply remind their thousands of readers, in the Dominion and the United States, of the principles that guide them in the selection of authors. In order to success, even in a business point of view, it is necessary to keep in line with those great intellectual, moral, and spiritual laws, which are recognized as essential to the highest well-being of the State and the individual, while at the same time the books chosen must be adapted to the necessities of the great masses of the people. These conditions, so far as can be judged by their rapid sale, are met in the writings of the author of this volume. Three volumes of his sermons, published ten years ago, have long been out of print, while his more recent work on "Future Punishment," is already in its thirteenth thousand. Our methods of business are such, that we invite a thorough examination of every new book offered by our Agents before a sale is made. That the present volume will stand such an examination we feel assured. The great variety of the topics embraced, the candid and impartial manner in which they are discussed, and the religious spirit which breathes throughout, must make it acceptable to a very large circle of readers.

THE PUBLISHERS.

Brantford, Ontario, 1887.

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QUESTIONS OF THE DAY.

Christian Citizenship.

“I am a man, which am a citizen of no mean city.”

—Acts 21, v. 39.

CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP.

HE apostle Paul is on his way to Jerusalem, thence to Rome, where finally he suffered death. On his way thither, he was violently assailed by excited and infuriated Jews, who stirred up the people to lay hands upon him. All sorts of false accusations were made against him, the chief captain among others saying: "Art thou not that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderer?" In reply the apostle says: "I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city."

We propose to speak from these words, on the privileges and obligations of christian citizenship, with special reference to the land in which we live, and of which we boast.

The public mind is at the present moment, as it rightly should be, much exercised as to the coming elections. * It indicates a healthy condition of the body politic, when the character and actions of public men are closely investigated and narrowly criticised. When a nation becomes so avaricious, or so indifferent to its honor and welfare, that it allows men of no reputation to pass into office, its existence is doomed. Apart, however, from the great political

* Delivered on occasion of a Parliamentary election.

questions involved in the present contest, there are a few thoughts concerning the character and qualifications of those who are called to exercise the franchise, that may not be out of place. While it is almost universally acknowledged that the extension of the franchise in Canada and Great Britain has been an immense boon to all concerned, it is nevertheless to be lamented, that many who are put in possession of this tremendous power for good or for evil, use it thoughtlessly and unwisely. What then, let us enquire, are some of the qualifications of christian citizenship?

Christian citizenship should include in the individual, sobriety, intelligence, and religious principle. No man who does not possess in some measure such qualifications, can benefit the nation of which he is a member. By sobriety we of course mean temperance, chastity, and morality in the widest sense. No man who is unfit to govern his appetites and restrain his passions can creditably take part in the duties and obligations of good citizenship. No man can have a higher aim for his country than he has for himself. He who is ignorant of what is best for his own happiness, and who acts in direct opposition to the plainest dictates of reason in his manner of life, cannot choose what is best for the interest of his fellowmen in their collective capacity. People may say of such a man, "that he is his own worst enemy ;" but this is not the fact. In our collective capacity, as members of society, every man's conduct has a bearing upon that of his neighbor. "No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself," is a truth engraven in every department of social life. In the commonwealth, men are not rated by their character at the polling booth or the ballot box, but by their personality, so that the most degraded and wicked man counts just as much as the purest and most upright citizen. Hence the necessity, that in laying the foundations of this new Dominion, we should insist on sobriety as one of the most prominent and valuable traits of citizenship. You have a direct interest and I have a direct interest in

raising the standard of character ; in seeing to it that laws for the prevention of crime are respected, and that such measures are instituted and faithfully carried out, as shall tend to the promotion of good government in the community and nation. You cannot, it is said, make men virtuous by Act of Parliament. If so, the more urgent is the call that christian influence should be brought to bear against all that is dishonorable in the commonwealth, and that men whose character is notorious for unblushing wickedness, should be regarded as traitors to the nation and enemies to its prosperity.

Christian citizenship should also include a certain measure of intelligence. Especially is this the case, where there is so much equality, that no man need despair of attaining the highest civic honors. We have a noble system of education so far as it goes, but not specially adapted nor intended to afford the higher forms of knowledge which christian citizenship demands. The intelligence of which we speak is only to be gained by experience and study. If, as in many lands, men had little or no interest in the selection of their rulers, and but little opportunity of gaining an acquaintance with social ethics, to demand such intelligence would be unwise as it would be unnecessary. But our case is vastly different. Every citizen of this country may, without the smallest difficulty, gain such an amount of knowledge as will make him an intelligent and independent agent, in every matter that concerns the commonwealth. We do not believe in this land that ignorance is a virtue. We do not believe that governments are the purest, where the inhabitants are so stupid as not to canvass the actions of their rulers. On the contrary, we believe that knowledge and intelligence are the birthright of every class, and that wherever they are general, there will be the greatest amount of individual happiness, the firmest government, and the most righteous laws.

Every elector should, then, have general information on all the leading questions of the past and present. We do not mean that

every man should be a university graduate, or a scholar in the proper sense of the term ; but that knowledge should be possessed by the humblest classes in our land, in such proportion as to qualify them for the more important trusts of public life. Should not every citizen have some knowledge of history—the history of his own and other lands—of the changes that have taken place in the customs, occupations, and habits of the people? Should he not add to this some acquaintance with the political institutions of his own and other lands? How without such intelligent knowledge is he to help to make the laws and repeal them?—to frame and fashion local or general governments, or discharge all those duties which belong to intelligent and responsible agents? On moral grounds—on patriotic grounds—we demand all this in every man who lays claim to the privileges of the nation.

It is admitted that there never was a period when knowledge was more generally diffused than at present. At the same time, those who are most conversant with the literary tastes of the day, declare that there never was a period when there was less demand for the more solid and thoughtful productions of genius than there is now. Nay, were there a demand for serial publications at all proportioned to the citizenship of the nation, there would be little cause for regret. But large masses of our population have no knowledge but what comes to them second-hand ;—taken from the lips of men who are not over faithful in certain circumstances to facts of history. The extreme partisan or the prejudiced political print, or the platform orator, are the only authorities on all matters affecting the destiny of the nation.

Now in such a land as ours, where books are so cheap, and where the channels of information are so abundant and free, and where there are so many inducements to rise to superior positions in society, it is a shame for any man to be contented with the mere tittle-tattle of the market-place. No man need call another master,

as regards the more common subjects that demand attention, and he who values intelligence so poorly as to put forth no efforts to obtain it, or goes about the streets gathering up the crumbs of commonplace conversation, instead of refreshing himself at the fountain-head, is unworthy to exercise the privileges of citizenship, or obtain any honor within the gift of his fellow-men.

Christian citizenship should, finally, include religious principle. If a man is not guided by principle in his business, men cease to put faith in anything he does or says. It is just so in public life; principle, stern and unbending, must control every act that has for its object the civil and social welfare of our fellow-men. Where there is no principle there is no stability of character. A man actuated by principle is not imposed upon, flattered, or persuaded, or coaxed into doubtful positions by the false representations of designing men. You are always sure where to find such a man, and you honor him for his consistency and straightforward conduct, though it should be opposed to your views, and at variance with your creed.

It is often said in regard to religious matters, that it is dangerous for any man to make expediency his guide. It is so in regard to political matters. It is no shame for a man to change his opinions, provided there is sufficient cause for such a change, and that on calm reflection his conscience demands it. But to move hither and thither at the call of this or that faction, to renounce all independence of thought and action, because self-interest, or expediency, or the gratification of friends demands it, lowers a man in the estimation of all who admire firmness and strength of character.

Our acts as citizens, next to our public acts as christians, are matters of serious importance. Church membership we regard as a solemn transaction between the soul and its Maker. We invest it with a responsibility which every thinking man acknowledges to

be just. But we look upon actions affecting the nation in a very different light. And yet the difference is not so great after all. The same sincerity, the same honest convictions, the same purity of motive should be apparent in the one case as in the other. A man is responsible at the bar of God, not simply for his religious profession, but for the whole of his life, and where he suppresses the clear convictions of conscience for the maxims of policy, he renders himself amenable to a higher than human jurisdiction. There is no act of an intelligent man so insignificant in its results as to be beneath the notice of the Almighty, and just in proportion as the transactions he engages in are far-reaching and comprehensive in their sweep, embracing the destinies of coming generations and affecting the glory of God in the kingdoms of the world, do they carry with them an importance and momentousness that can scarcely be realized or weighed. When we render an account of our stewardship there will be not only a classification of specific acts, but a scrutiny of motives, a laying bare of the secret springs of action and a revealing of the hidden thoughts.

If we had such citizens, what a nation would be developed within the next century! What a power would this land exercise in controlling the acts of other nations—what silent but omnipotent influence would be felt wherever her name was mentioned! If we had such citizens, what senators, what legislators, what magistrates would represent us in our highest places of honor! Nor is there any true panacea for the social and political evils which afflict us, in common with other countries, but a raising of the entire social structure. It is not by this or that government—it is not by mere change of political leaders and measures, however necessary at times, nor by the conflict of party, that true national greatness can be achieved; but by the prevalence of religious principle among our inhabitants, by the spread of Bible truth, by hallowed Sabbaths and well-filled churches. A standing army is

good and useful in its place ; armories and arsenals and fleets of war ships may give an external prestige and grandeur to a nation ; but the best defence that any country can possess, is an enlightened, moral and law-abiding citizenship ; an intelligent, laboring population ; a free and complete system of education, so unsectarian and non-denominational, as to meet the just demands of every fa'th and every rank and condition of life. " Happy is the people that is in such a case. Yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord."

Still further ;—if we had such a sober, enlightened, and high-minded citizenship, how easily would the machinery of government be worked ! The friction of party strife, the endless bickerings, criminations, and re-criminations which pass between respectable men ; the unseemly if not dishonest and unchristian measures that are so often resorted to for the accomplishing of certain ends, would be unknown. The voice of the community and commonwealth would frown down all attempts to fetter individual independence, and hold up to righteous scorn any man or number of men, who would venture to trade in the rights of citizenship. Bribery, coercion, and intimidation would be unknown. Instead of the hatred, hostility, and bitterness that prevail, there would be good-will and forbearance, sympathy and assistance, mutual love and kindness, among the different classes of society. We would come nearer and nearer to the golden age of the past, sung of by the poet, when he says :—

" Then none was for a party,
Then all were for the state,
Then the great man helped the poor,
And the poor man loved the great.
Then lands were fairly portioned,
Then spoils were fairly sold ;
The Romans were like brothers,
In the brave days of old !"

Such a state of things christianity is to produce. Not vapid declamation about the rights of man and the wrongs of the oppres-

sed, but the healthy, healing balm of religious truth, brought home to the heart and conscience of the highest and lowest in the land.

We have entered as a Christian nation but recently on a new phase of political existence* and what our future history shall be among the kingdoms of the world is very much in our own hands. Some of the young men who read these lines are destined to wield a mighty power in our civic institutions. Surely it is worth their while to seek after that knowledge and dignity of character, which is far better than the proudest title conferred by royalty. The world is not long in finding out the men who are born to command. For a time they may be overlooked, and other less worthy characters usurp their place, but ultimately the sceptre falls into their hands. Rich men without intellects or moral character, and cunning crafty diplomats, devoid of conscience, are indeed most pitiable objects; but cultured minds, directed and inspired by holy aims for the good of humanity and the glory of God, are the noblest of all possessions. And it is such minds that in coming years are to rule our land. The time is fast approaching when the only rank recognized will be superiority of mental endowments, sterling principle, and high-toned honor. Then civil distinctions shall no longer be so lightly esteemed that they must be offered to each and every man by turn, but when next to the sacred office of the ministry, the highest possible honor shall be rule and authority in the state. To bring about such a desirable state of things is surely worth the united effort of Christian citizens. It surely is worth one's striving for, to increase the reputation of this nation, and raise her to that position to which her name, her wide-spread territory, her noble ancestry and traditions entitle her; not to seek office simply for personal gain or empty titles that perish ere they are enjoyed, but to make her the instrument of untold blessings to the world at large; to lift up purity and rectitude and justice

* Referring to Confederation.

to their rightful place in the administration of law, and make Canada, what the poet says of England, when it will be

Praise and boast enough
In every clime and travel where we may
That we were born her children.

If such a period is possible, there must be less boasting of the individual and more of the nation ; there must be another kind of patriotism than what is prevalent at the present day. Not how can I profit by the nation, but how can I enrich the nation in all the elements of manhood—in all those enterprises and projects which indicate vitality and progress ; in all those stalwart and robust virtues that ensure permanence and immortality ; such should be the question of every citizen. Your promotion and my promotion is a small matter compared with the general good. It is a poor thing for a man to feel that he is but so much dead weight to his country ; that but for his selfishness and indolence, she would have been further advanced in the race of civilization and more prolific of blessings to the world ; that by his personal actions he has brought upon her the reproach and scoff of foreigners, and exposed her to a rude and heartless but none the less truthful criticism. Next to the duties we owe to the church of Christ are our obligations to the nation—obligations which increase in number and rise in importance, in proportion as we have enlarged conceptions of our indebtedness to the land in which we live. Let us then at the present important juncture in our country's history realize the responsibilities of citizenship, and act as christian men who intend to give her such a name and standing as shall exalt our land in the eyes of the world and start her in a new career of usefulness and honor. While we love and pray for the prosperity of other kingdoms, the welfare of this the land of our birth or adoption must be the first wish of every patriot. Yes :—

There is a land of every land the pride,
Beloved by heaven o'er all the world beside :
Where brighter suns dispense serener light,
And milder moons emparadise the night.
There is a spot of earth supremely blest,
A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest.
Where shall that land—that spot of earth be found ?
Art thou a man ? a patriot ? look around !
O, thou shalt find, howe'er thy footsteps roam,
That land thy country, and that spot thy home.
Man, through all ag^{es} of revolving time—
Unchanging man, in every varying clime,
Deems his own land, of every land the pride,
Beloved by heaven o'er all the world beside ;
His home the spot of earth supremely blest ;
A dearer sweeter spot than all the rest

Perhaps they are wrong and take too gloomy a view of society, who assert that our towns and cities in Canada in many instances are retrograding in the average morality of their inhabitants. And yet the men who are often elected to office in our town and county councils and our parliaments, give occasion for such an opinion. But seldom indeed, comparatively, do virtue and sobriety assert their claims and carry their nominees. Men of easy-going morals and suspicious honesty, and who can never seek for their country a higher standard of character than they deem necessary for themselves, are in the majority of cases elected. The mantle of charity which our electors throw over the imperfection and scandals which attach to many of our leading politicians is verily broad and accommodating. Indeed, were every christian man in our country to exercise his rights, it is doubtful if they could outnumber the masses who seem to have no regard for honesty, integrity and honorable conduct. While in Great Britain, there is a very preceptible and gratifying change in this matter, here in Canada it is in notable instances the reverse. Christian men of all classes admit and mourn the fact—politicians confess it. It is the lament on all hands, that the overwhelming power and controlling influence in

national affairs lies in the hands of that portion of our citizens “who fear not God, nor regard men.”

The rallying cry of many an election campaign has been “Measures, not Men.” Like many similar phrases, it has a ring of sincerity about it, that is apt to mislead unthinking minds. It only needs, however, a moment’s reflection to show how exceedingly foolish and vicious such language is, when great interests are at stake in the future of our country ; and that Christian electors, in exercising the franchise, are bound to regard both measures and men, when choosing citizens to represent them in Parliament and other places of trust and honour. It is eminently right and proper to know the views of candidates for Parliamentary honours, in regard to important questions, that command the attention of all classes, and involve the prosperity and happiness of the community at large ; it is also wise to canvass the votes and speeches of our legislators, with a view to a removal or withdrawal of our trust and confidence, but it is no less the duty of reflecting minds to weigh the private character of members of Parliament, and ask themselves the question, whether such conduct is an earnest of honesty, purity and unselfishness when the same man is called upon to deal with matters affecting the welfare of his fellow citizens. We lay it down as a principle that cannot be gainsayed, that no man can be more honest in public than in private life, and that no man who has consciously and flagrantly dishonored his private character, is fit to be trusted in legislating for the nation, and guarding its interests against overreaching and designing powers.

One would imagine that political parties of every shade of opinion would admit the common sense of such a proposition ; but, singular to say, it is frequently called in question, if not directly denied. It is boldly asserted that a man’s private character has nothing to do with his public life ;—he may be dishonest, intemperate, unreliable, and break almost every command of the deca-

logue, and yet be our representative in the councils of the land. In regard to certain leading statesmen and politicians, how often do we hear their admirers making the remark, that "they are not just what they should be in character, not over scrupulous in their dealings, and not over rigid in their morality, not very decided or pronounced in their political faith, but such good fellows, such cunning, expert politicians, and such shrewd, successful manipulators of men and measures, that they must not be too severely handled, in our criticism of their secret faults."

It is perhaps wise and proper that when opposing candidates meet together face to face on political platforms or on the hustings, that public issues and public actions alone should be subject matter for debate. But it is altogether different when constituencies are called to elect men to represent them for a term of years in Parliament. They have a right and they are blameworthy if they do not exercise the right of canvassing the history and opinions of these candidates, and coming to an intelligent conclusion as regards their fitness for certain important offices of trust and power. Nothing is doing so much to sap the foundations of morality and public integrity, as the theory so extensively promulgated and practiced by so-called christian men that political adroitness and trickery atone for all sorts of private sins, and that electors are to vote blindly for the standard-bearers of their party, however shameful is their private record before the world. In a short time, if we go on as we are doing, virtuous living will count for nothing in our country, and the veriest scapegraces occupy seats in our legislative halls. We protest against such teaching and such conduct, as unworthy of intelligent citizens and derogatory to the best interests of society at large.

Let us see how such a theory works in other callings and relations of life. A merchant, for example, is in want of a confidential clerk—one that can be entrusted with his correspondence—with

his accounts—with his books—with his monies—in a word, with the entire character of his establishment. He wants a man of character, who in the absence of the principal can take his place, having in view in all his transactions the profit and honorable name of the concern. Among many applicants, the situation is solicited by a plausible, smart, and withal capable-looking person, whose abilities are of first-class character, and who has in former years occupied such positions of trust and responsibility. He is thoroughly versed in book-keeping—knows all the mysteries of finance—has had an extensive acquaintance with the leading wholesale houses in the trade—and so far as knowledge and ability are concerned, is just the man for the position. But his antecedents are of a decidedly suspicious character. In fact, he has been too clever for his former employers. With all his knowledge and energy, he has never understood the distinction between "*meum and tuum*;" in other words, between what is rightfully his own, and what belongs to his employer. As a consequence, he is shunned and rejected on all hands. Where honesty is a first requisite, no amount of tact or shrewdness can make up for its absence. A man with no other credentials but what a term of service in the penitentiary affords, is not the person to receive employment on any terms whatever. Reformation is possible in every such case, but until there is good evidence of the fact, no merchant would for a moment trust his honor or his means in the custody of such a criminal.

Or the case may be somewhat different. The applicant may not be guilty of fraud or embezzlement, but of drunkenness. He is a good-hearted, genial, jovial, fellow, as the world says—generous to a fault, and a true friend to those that need the kind of friendship he has to offer. But he has no command whatever over his appetites. He can not be depended upon for a single hour. His sobriety is the exception—his intemperance the rule. Habitual indulgence in such a vice has ruined body and soul, until he is now but a wreck

of his former manhood. In sane and sensible moments, no man is more penitent and grief-stricken for his folly. His promises of reform and amendment are apparently firm and sincere, but when temptation presents itself again, he is prostrate. The passion for strong drink, like a very demon, asserts itself, and conquers his better nature. Such a man is certainly not beyond the pale of hope. Strong and persistent determination to avoid the very appearance of evil, assisted by the grace of God, can clothe such a man in his right mind again, and make him a useful member of society, but until such a radical change has been effected, no merchant in his senses would trust him with the pettiest details of common life, far less clothe him with the responsibilities of official work.

If, then, dishonest men, and immoral men, men treacherous, crafty, intemperate and unreliable, are not to be trusted with the common business of the world, shall we elect such men to represent us in Parliament? We speak in the interest of no party, but in the interests of public integrity and good government, when we unhesitatingly say, assuredly not! If in the ranks of parties striving after political victory such men are to be found, let them be left in the shades of private life, until good evidence is furnished of a decided change in their habits and propensities. Suspend them for a time, or put them on probation, as certain ecclesiastical bodies do with guilty members. Give us good honest men, actuated by principle, zealous for the country's good, possessed of unblemished records in their private life and dealings, and we can trust such men to represent us, though their political creed may not entirely meet our approbation. If the choice is given us, whether to elect a sober, high-principled, straightforward man of another political faith, or an intemperate, unscrupulous, deceitful and selfish man of our own, we prefer the former. Guided by an enlightened conscience, we have no misgivings as to his course of conduct in matters affecting the national honour.

The matter before us may be put in a still stronger light. In the ranks of the clergy, as in the ranks of politicians, there are to be found unworthy characters—men who enter the office for a piece of bread, regardless of the welfare of souls. Such men may for a time, it is admitted, be the means of doing much good. So long as their hypocrisy holds out, they may by force of natural talent and an assumed earnestness and zeal, be instruments of making other men better than they are themselves. But what congregation of christians would choose such a man for its spiritual guide, whose character was open to the least breath of suspicion? No amount of genius, or eloquence, or commanding pulpit power, can compensate for the want of purity and consistency, in speech and behaviour. The private life of the man gives tone to his public appearances, and commends the religion he enforces to the heart and conscience of his hearers. Apart from this, his words can have no value;—when wrong-doing is once discovered, the idol is dashed from the throne of the affections, and branded with eternal ignominy.

It is so in every department of social life but in politics. What is considered crime in every other case, is regarded in this but a petty misdemeanor, which can be easily condoned or forgiven, on account of past services or extraordinary ability! And thus public men are not only tolerated, but encouraged in their wickedness. They may sacrifice the honour of their country for the sake of personal aggrandisement; they may stain the purity of office by habitual and notorious immorality; they may corrupt the fountain-head of justice by the most scandalous acts of legislation, and still remain secure in possession of their honors! In proportion as a man is endowed with brilliant and commanding gifts, he may continue to violate laws, both human and divine, and laugh at the censures and criticisms of the few who remonstrate and condemn such conduct! Well may we say of such a state of affairs—“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil—that put darkness

for light, and light for darkness ; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter ; which justify the wicked for reward."

Public opinion, or rather prejudice, which sustains such conduct and winks at such monstrous anomalies, will gradually come over to the side of truth, and avenge itself upon unprincipled and reckless demagogues. Our country is rich enough, as an American writer says, to afford to do without the greatest intellects God lets the devil buy, and any name, however illustrious, which links itself to abuses, is sure to be overwhelmed by the impetuous current of society. The judgment of humanity in the end is just. Men who are now fondled and courted and idolized as the political heroes of the hour, shall yet receive a just and impartial verdict at the hands of their fellow men. Of many a man thus honoured and exalted, it shall yet be said—

He left a corsair's name to other times,
Linked with one virtue, and a thousand crimes.

Some of us in this country take it for granted that our nationality—English, Scotch, or Irish—is sufficient to make our reputation, without individual efforts,—to preserve the memories and traditions of the past. The spirit of the age takes little account of a man's moral character, provided he is a success in public life. The pernicious maxim, that "the end justifies the means," is having a damaging effect upon the stern uncompromising virtues that flourished in a bygone generation, and blinding us to the essential difference between right and wrong. Men who have been educated to believe that—"worth makes the man, the want of it the fellow,"—are not slow to act a part, in strange antagonism to their creed, provided place, power and prerogative are secured. Old-fashioned maxims as to honest poverty, straightforward dealings and unselfish patriotism, are laughed down as behind the age, and as uncongenial and unprofitable. It may not appear so to the superficial observer, but I venture to affirm, that never until the ethics of Christianity

are general, can we hope for commercial integrity, confidence in business relations, unselfish statesmanship, and gentlemanly conduct in the high places of the land.

The future development of this great nation calls for the earnest and united efforts of all good men, until that happy period arrives when, in the language of the poet, it can be said of this Dominion :

Then the progeny that springs
From the forests of our land,
Armed with thunder, clad with wings,
Shall a wider world command.

Regions Cæsar never knew
Thy posterity shall sway ;
Where his eagles never flew,
None invincible as they.





Capital and Labor.

The Reciprocal Rights of Employer and Employed.

“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”

—Galatians 6, v. 2.

“Servants obey in all things your masters, according to the flesh ; not with eye service as men pleasers.”—Colossians 3, v. 22.

“Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal : knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.”—Colossians 4, v. 1.

“The labourer is worthy of his hire.”—Luke 10, v. 7.

CAPITAL AND LABOR.

 FEEL the delicacy and the difficulty of speaking upon the question of Capital and Labour, and the relations of employers and employees. It is not at all likely that every statement made will be approved by all my hearers. I feel, however, that if I make the smallest contribution to a better feeling among the different classes in our community, the effort will not be altogether vain.

I am not here to discuss in the abstract the many abstruse questions that belong to the science of political economy. I take it, that comparatively few of our workingmen have ever read or studied "Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations," or the more recent works on the matter in dispute that are daily issued from the press. Their constant efforts to provide for themselves and families from day to day, preclude the leisure that may be profitably occupied by students, in discussing and solving theories which seldom come within the range of practical experience. Nor shall I refer, save in the most general terms, to the aims of certain societies which claim to direct and control the labour of our artizan population. I pass no judgment upon the motives that actuate their leaders, although I cannot help saying that the principles enunciated, when carried

out to their legitimate conclusions, seem in the opinion of many christian men, to lead to absolute tyranny, and to forbid all free and independent action.

I speak as the friend of the workingman in the fullest sense of the word. Naturally, my sympathies are with this class. I am one of themselves. In boyhood I knew what it was to labor from before the dawn of day till long after darkness, at wages which no Canadian apprentice would accept. My parents belonged to the humbler classes of society, but were rich toward God, if not toward men. And in all that affects, or can possibly forward the well-being of the working classes, I have taken a deep interest since my entrance upon the ministry. I feel, therefore, that above many, I can bespeak their indulgence, whether the thoughts presented provoke criticism or are adjudged as reasonable.

Once more—I speak in no patronizing way to the toilers of society, who rightly despise all such affected condescension—far less do I avail myself of the present occasion, to counsel them as to their every day deportment. Taken as a whole, I believe that the conduct of our artizans, to say the least, is as high as that of many employers of labour. If there are instances of intemperance and shiftlessness and prodigality among them, there are crimes of not less magnitude to be found among those who rank among the higher classes ; and refuse to mingle with the masses. To rebuke the one, and not the other, is unfair. If the mechanic who neglects his family for the tavern or the club room is deserving of censure, so is the man who secretly indulges in debauchery, or lives extravagantly, upon the gains of oppression and dishonesty.

The rights of capital and labour, of masters and servants, is one of the vexed questions of political economy, upon which much has been written, but with very little definite results. The views of economists and partizans—the selfishness in some cases of the employer, and the unreasonableness in other cases of the employee

have kept apart classes, whose interests ought to be one. It is, however, no time for repeating economic truisms, such as that the laborer has a right to work or refuse working, and the employer to employ or refuse employment. Every one admits this. The legitimacy of organization, for the purpose of bettering the condition of workingmen, is generally acknowledged. All classes of citizens in a free country, have the right to unite in trade or labor associations, and use all legitimate means for the furtherance of their interests. But while this is true, it is none the less worthy of note, that sympathy with the working man ends, as soon as efforts for his improvement pass beyond moral and lawful means. The capitalist who has been a laborer (and there are many such in Canada), and the laborer who hopes to become a capitalist and master, know equally well, that immoral and illegal means must lead to ruin.

There is much to be said on behalf of the workingman in his effort to better his condition. The system of reckless competition in trades and industries, that is now pursued in almost every civilized country, is suicidal to the best interests of society. Merchants and manufacturers, underselling each other, are compelled to reduce wages, until existence for the workingman becomes a weary struggle. Such a state of things produces combinations and trades unions among workingmen. They urge their claim to what they believe is only the just reward of honest toil, while capitalists resist what they imagine is destructive of their interests. What is to be the upshot of this unseemly strife? Shall capital subjugate labor, or labor capital? Or, rather, should not both parties unite on some peaceable solution of their differences, to the mutual benefit of both?

The present agitation has been chiefly promoted by outside influences—by itinerant vendors of stale and wornout phrases as to capital and labor, who are recent importations from the over-populated continental cities of Europe to the United States, and in a few

instances by certain parties who seek the position of leaders among their fellow workmen, and assume the right to dictate to the industrious mechanics of Canada, on what terms they shall sell their labor to employers. In most cases these self-elected leaders are men of the most limited mental capacity, making up, however, for the lack of brains, by an amount of assurance that would indicate the very highest attainments in the science of political economy and good government. Their influence so far, where they have exercised any influence whatever, has been most pernicious upon the parties mostly interested, and the country at large. Strikes have taken place in towns and cities, resulting in almost every instance in grievous loss to the employee. For as matters now stand, labor cannot coerce capital, save in very rare and exceptional cases. Better terms and more satisfactory relations between master and servant are not to be brought about by such measures. They but widen the chasm which already exists, and foster feelings of mutual anger and resentment, which years cannot abate. Admitting for the moment that the working classes are entitled to greater privileges than they now possess, these privileges are not to be secured by violent tirades and inflammatory denunciations and noisy demonstrations against employers, but by the presentation in courteous terms of their reasonable demands, and the exercise of moderation and prudence, which are sure eventually to bring negotiations to a successful issue.

It is comparatively easy, when facts are not tabulated, and when the present prosperous condition of the working classes, as contrasted with the past, is studiously concealed, to make some men believe that they are cruelly wronged, and are little better than Russian serfs or West India slaves. Listening to certain speeches recently delivered, one would imagine that the working men of Canada lived under a despotism of the most debasing character, where manhood and independence were systematically crushed by

rapacious millionaires for their own aggrandizement. "Life to the workingman is a ceaseless degradation, a daily martyrdom, a funeral procession to the grave!" says one of the champions for the rights of labor in Great Britain. Such talk is both false and foolish. Every one knows the wonderful ameliorations that have taken place in the lot of the workingman since the sixteenth century. Every year, through the pressure of public opinion, grievances are being redressed that hindered his advancement, and the way opened up for his physical and moral improvement. Even in Great Britain, where the privileges and remuneration of the workingman are vastly inferior to Canada, a great improvement has taken place in recent years. Any one in the smallest degree acquainted with the state of society in England in the days of the Henrys' and Charles', will gladly acknowledge the revolution that has taken place in the condition of the working classes. In the beginning of the sixteenth century, the houses of workingmen were built of mud, and in many cases unfit for the shelter of cattle, not to speak of men. Their food consisted wholly of beans and peas and the coarser vegetables. Wages were considered extravagant at a shilling a day, the average being but sixpence. Members of the House of Commons complained that owing to high wages paid mechanics—one shilling a day—England could no longer compete with the looms of India. Farm hands had five shillings a week in England, while in Scotland and Ireland they had less. And while wages were thus low, provisions were in many cases higher than at the present day. If again we restrict our enquiry to the present century, we find a gradual but steady improvement in the condition of the workingman. In 1800 the wages of an English stone mason were sixteen shillings per week—now they are thirty; while the remuneration of mechanics and skilful workmen is more than double what it was at the beginning of the present century. These facts, which might be indefinitely multiplied, show clearly how little foundation there is

for the vague and sweeping assertions, that workingmen do not share in the general prosperity, and that capital and capitalists absorb all the profits of the age.

No one will pretend to state otherwise, than that the average condition of workingmen in Canada and the United States is in advance of the old world. Mechanics in this city, who I am told were paid $62\frac{1}{2}$ cents per day, thirty years ago, now receive \$2.50 and \$3.00 per day ; indeed the vast emigration to the continent of America, at the rate of one thousand a day during the summer months, proves as much. These emigrants have good grounds for believing that in the new world their chances for advancement and acquiring a competency of this world's goods, are far more likely than in their native country. Friends and relatives who have preceded them have vastly improved their condition, and are urging those who still remain at home to follow. They have acquired large tracts of land and herds of cattle, cleared their farms, erected comfortable dwellings, and surrounded themselves with everything that can conduce to material prosperity. Mechanics have risen to be the employers of hundreds, and servants to be masters. In view of all this, is it not foolish and criminal for any class of men to sow the seeds of dissension between employers and employed, and hinder the social advancement of all classes in the land ? Whatever anomalies still exist, are to be removed or ameliorated by mutual concessions and the interchange of kindly sentiment, not by appeals to brute force. The intelligent mechanic is just as independent as the master, and can easily work his way in spite of all opposition to place and power.

Indeed the phrase "workingman," as used in the old world, is to a great extent, meaningless in such a land as Canada. We are all workingmen. Different forms of labor exist, but how few can live without hard labor and constant industry ! In some countries the term "workingman" may be used as the language of supercil-

ious contempt and haughty ignorance, but not in Canada. The theory that any class should be doomed to ignorance, in order to render a more servile obedience, should have no advocates, where education is regarded as the birthright of every child. New and better ideas prevail. "The body is not one member but many," says the apostle Paul. The eye cannot say unto the hand, "I have no need of thee;" nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of thee." And therefore, he reasons, there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care one of another. For whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it. Applied to social economics, these verses teach, that the law of rational creation is mutual dependence and co-operation. Every man's work is honorable, if honest and virtuous, and necessary to the welfare and happiness of the nation. The quarryman, who blasts the rock and loosens the stone from its sleep of centuries, is just as useful and necessary as the hewer, who prepares the carved and chiselled blocks for the building. The man who digs the foundation is as useful as the builder; the miner as the smelter, or machinist or goldsmith; the lumberer, who with brawny arm fells the stately oak, as the carpenter and joiner; the compositor and pressman, as the writer; and the ship builder as the captain and pilot. The fact, that we are apt to recognize that kind of work which is most palpable and tangible, to the exclusion of what is further removed from common observation, does not disprove our assertion, that all kinds of labor are equally honorable and necessary to the welfare of society. Until this idea is universally accepted, we shall not be entirely free from occasional strife and angry crimination. Until the master recognizes the workman as a co-laborer in the great field of human industry, and the workman regards the employer in the same light, there will be feuds, antagonisms and misunderstandings. More than a mere commercial

contract should bind employer and employed together. The workmen should not be classed with the machinery—with cylinders and pistons and wheels and cranks. Brains ought not to be weighed with the dross of the furnace. Men ought to be valued and recompensed, according as their labor is profitable, and not used as beasts of burden !

At the same time it will be admitted by all reasonable men, that the responsibilities of employers are deserving of large compensation. We often fail to recognize the immense risks that capitalists take in embarking in new and large undertakings. Men who by their energy, ingenuity and superior ability, have raised themselves to prominent positions in the mercantile world, merit honor and emoluments. The largest possible return is often but a small recompense for the toil and anxiety undergone. Among these there are also many who are not only just, but generous, kind, sympathetic and merciful in all their dealings, and whose highest ambition it is to better the condition of their workmen as well as themselves. Many families in this city, I have reason to know, have thus been cared for in times of sickness and death, when friends were few and their wants were many.

As indicating the prevalence of this friendly and honorable spirit, mention should be made of the method adopted by the Messrs. Denny, the prominent ship builders on the Clyde, in dealing with their workmen. Some time ago it was thought advisable to revise and extend the yard rules. Instead of altering the rules to suit their own desires, the Messrs. Denny asked the assistance and co-operation of all classes of their workmen, in the task of revision. For that purpose a series of conferences were held, which were attended by the members of the firm, the members of the staff, and delegates appointed by the workers. At the final conference, Mr. William Denny, addressing the delegates, said he believed such conferences were the first in the whole history of labor in

which employer and employed had together discussed rules, and come to a friendly and reasonable conclusion upon them. The results of the conferences were, that they had a workable, just, and effective code of rules. He believed the code of rules agreed upon would be more efficient from the workmen having had a share in making them, and having given them their approval, and that in the future solution of the labor question, these principles would be widely recognized. I believe that the time is coming when the workingman shall receive remuneration in proportion to the profits of his industry, and when co-operation shall be more generally adopted. But such a condition of affairs is not to be hastened by combinations and strikes, and boycotting and dynamite explosions, planned in almost every case, not by American or Canadian operatives, but by infidel communists from the old world. For such lawless and diabolical measures the better classes of our workmen are, however, held responsible by many who cannot distinguish between lawful and unlawful methods, that have recently been employed to adjust the differences between capital and labor. The direct tendency of such strikes is to withdraw capital and prevent new industries, while in almost every case, they far more seriously affect the workingman than the master.

The teachings of infidel socialists and political agitators, so prevalent in the western cities of the United States, are the greatest curse that any civilized nation can be afflicted with. It has been well said, that "the communism that would level all distinction and sweep out of sight the inequalities that will and that must arise, if men are to be what they ought to be, is irrational and unjust. To say that private property ought not to exist, is to say that individuals ought not to be themselves. It is to put a premium on idleness, and to present no adequate motive for the fullest development of one's powers. All men have a common interest in the world. It is their birth-place, their school, their workshop. It

is their temporary or preliminary home. They have the same sky, and sea, and earth to look upon, and the same great problems of life to solve. But it does not follow that all men ought, therefore to have an equal share of the enjoyments and possessions of the world. Such an affirmation would be false to universal life, to the true nature of man, and to the end for which the world exists. Justice demands an impartial administration of law, and the rendering to every one that which is due. No one ought to be unduly favored on the ground of purely fictitious circumstances, and no one ought to be unfairly debarred from the possibility of showing what is in him, and of improving his condition."

We have a very beautiful picture presented us in the second chapter of the book of Ruth, of the kindly relations that ought to exist, between masters and servants. It is an eastern harvest field, with a long line of reapers, sickle in hand, cutting down the precious grain. Boaz, the owner enters, and salutes the laborers in God's name, "The Lord be with you;" and they respond, "The Lord bless thee." Such a mode of salutation appears to have been common in the east, but it is all the more striking in view of the relations between master and servant in patriarchal times. These patriarchs were more than masters—they asserted unquestioned supremacy over their servants, akin to the serfdom of the feudal ages. There was no appeal from their mandates, and no such personal freedom enjoyed as at the present day. And yet in instances such as the one under consideration, there seems to have been far more actual kindness and good will than in many cases exist between masters and servants at the present day.

Boaz exhibits a spirit of sympathy and kindness. Courtesy towards inferiors, costs nothing. It is not incompatible with true dignity. It does not lessen authority or respect, to use familiar terms. It does not make servants less anxious to serve their master's interests. That the working classes are so often found



BOAZ AND RUTH.

disrespectful, is because of their rude and inconsiderate treatment, Threats and curses more than kindly words are their lot. Thus masters and servants stand apart, jealous of each other. The master regards the servant as only useful to increase his capital, and the servant works simply because he must, but with no regard to the promotion of his employer's interest. Out of this condition of affairs there come combinations, strikes, workingmen's leagues and unions, social revolutions, and anarchy and bloodshed.

Now what is the remedy for this and all other social grievances? Not mere human adjustments, and acts of parliament, and measures of expediency, that seem for a time to silence complaint, but in the claims of christian brotherhood being more generally recognized. Better terms cannot be dragged reluctantly from unwilling and avaricious masters, nor selfish operatives driven to render cheerful service. Differences in society there must be. Equality in the communistic sense of the term is impossible. But as all ranks are necessary to work out the problem of human existence there need be no jarring or conflict. The rich are as dependent upon the poor as the poor are upon the rich. It is bad for a nation when injustice leads to lawlessness, and brute force is demanded to suppress open riot. Religion is the grand salve for the sores of humanity—not the nostrum of politicians, but the gospel of Christ. In the body politic it teaches there should be no schism, "but the members should have the same care, the one of the other. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member honored, all the members rejoice with it."

The spirit of kindness manifested by Boaz towards the reapers is perfectly compatible with a diligent circumspection. The faithful servant has no cause to fear oversight and investigation, and the master dare not neglect it. It is not good for either party to be irresponsible. But watchfulness and supervision need not be

exercised in an inquisitorial and fault-finding spirit. It should just as often lead to commendation and promotion, as to criticism.

Boaz also exhibits in his conduct simple, earnest, heartfelt piety. He was not ashamed to acknowledge Israel's God, or to transact his business as accountable at His bar. Because he feared God, he loved his fellowmen. True sympathy for man takes its rise in love to God. The religion he possessed himself, he desired for his laborers. If the blessing of the Lord maketh rich, it also gives contentment to the poor. There are good masters who make no profession of religion whatever. But the best ought to be found among the professed followers of Christ. Where the standard of righteousness and justice, as laid down in God's word, is enforced and accepted as the rule of individual action, there will be no cause for differences, and perfect accord will exist between man and man.

In view of these statements, we remark: (*a*) That masters should have due regard to the physical welfare of their servants. The demands made upon a human being ought to be different from those made upon a machine. He ought not to be driven till his strength gives way, and until seeds of disease are sown that inevitably shorten life. The Christian public, as much as the employers of labor, have much to do in abridging the hours of labor. At their door lies the sin of unnecessary trading, when both master and servant ought to rest from toil. (*b*) Masters should have due regard to the social welfare of their servants. They deserve fair remuneration. Advantage ought not to be taken of over supply. Labor should be recompensed in proportion as it increases in value. The workmen in large manufacturing establishments are really business partners, and those above them for the time being, ought to think of them, and manage affairs in their interest as well as their own. Profit-sharing makes labor more efficient, and very materially reduces the expense of supervision. The temporal comforts of employees have claims upon the employer. Young men coming from

christian homes to strange cities, lonely and friendless, should be introduced to good companions, invited to the houses of masters, and made to feel that they are the objects of interest, beyond mere civil contracts. The gain in such cases is the master's more than the servant's. He has the choice of hands, and gains the good will of the community, in preference to unprincipled and grasping worldlings. (c) Masters should also have due regard to the religious welfare of their servants. They have a right to enjoin attendance upon ordinances, and enquire how their Sabbath days are spent. No young man is fit for any position of trust who scoffs at religion and dishonors God's day. But in order that such exercise of authority may be of value and command respect, business must be conducted on the principles of integrity. The religion of the master must be visible, to his servants, and practised on week days as well as the Lord's day.

There is need, it seems to me, for such truths being oft repeated at the present day. As business is now transacted, kindly relations between masters and servants is essential to harmony and good feeling. Machinery revolving at a rapid rate of speed, by constant friction catches fire, and in a twinkling the entire premises may be reduced to ashes. So of society as a whole. If we cannot return to the old patriarchal habits, and begin the day by saying to our employes, "The Lord be with you," let us at least endeavor to introduce Old Testament civility into our homes and into the haunts of commerce.

The cognate question, whether eight hours shall be a day's labor is a complex one, and depends upon various considerations. I have never felt that the workingmen of Canada had much sympathy with it, or were dissatisfied with present arrangements. The plea that it is intended for the mental and moral improvement of the workingmen will not, I fear, hold good. Certainly our communistic friends, who advocate the movement, are not in every case

patterns of sobriety and intelligence. That it is demanded on physical grounds, has never so far been demonstrated. Nor can it be argued on the basis of political economy. The earth will not give the same results for eight hours labor as for ten. The manufacturer cannot produce the same quantity of goods, nor make the same profits, under the eight hours system as the ten, and it follows that if profits are reduced, wages are reduced. Not only so, but the entire commonwealth suffers, as well as the individual operative and his family. Of course, as has been well said:—If anybody thinks he can make as much money as he needs by working eight hours a day, he ought to have full liberty to try the experiment. It is simply a question of personal choice. There is no question that eight hours or even four hours per day of vigorous labor will enable mankind to live. The blanket Indian can live on two hours' work. He wears but little clothing, sleeps in a wigwam on the ground, and eats his meat without fork or spoon. The question is one of contentment. If we are willing to live on a lower plane of living, and philosophically enjoy cheap surroundings, we can do so. But the majority of healthy, ambitious young men, would rather work sixteen hours than eight, provided the extra eight hours will put them one-half ahead of their competitors. The sixteen hour men will get there first, and be able to take a rest upon the mountain top of success, and look down at the eight hour men plodding below for a bare subsistence. And even should the eight hour rule become universal—skill, talent, energy, brains, will have the same relative advantage as they have now. But this can never come. For a law declaring that no man should work more than eight hours a day would be unconstitutional, and if the hours were not limited by law, would not the ambitious work over hours, and so practically annul the regulation? In other words, can any rule of labor be adopted, which will prevent the most industrious from earning as much as he can, or which will keep the most active,

alert, aspiring, avaricious, frugal, sober and efficient men from getting to the top and keeping there? No man can get something for nothing, and it is exceedingly doubtful if any new-fangled invention will be able to set aside the indestructible law of supply and demand, or reduce to a dead level of mediocrity the good and bad, the trained and the ignorant, the intelligent and the stupid, the industrious and the lazy, and all the various sorts and classes of workingmen.

There are some industries where, by special arrangements between employers and employed, eight hours may be substituted for ten. Where workmen are paid by the hour, there is no practical difficulty; the only effect is reduced wages. But it should be remembered that at least one-half of all the laborers in the country, such as fishermen, miners, railroad men and farmers, are so employed that an eight hour law cannot possibly apply to them at all. The workmen who clamour so loudly for a reduction in the hours of labor forget, I fear, how many toil ten or twelve hours for five days in each week, and on Saturdays till near midnight. I have great sympathy with the salesmen and saleswomen in our stores, whose hours of labor are often lengthened by the thoughtlessness of the buyers, among whom possibly are many of the men who would have their own hours of labor lessened. And what shall we say of farmers, who at certain seasons of the year toil fourteen and sixteen out of the twenty-four, and professional men who have no cessation night nor day.

This labor question is drifting away from its proper field of discussion, and becoming involved in politics. Very soon, as years ago, when elections draw near, we shall hear of "the workingman's candidate," and "the friend of the workingman," attached to certain candidates for Parliamentary honors by their supporters, in hope of securing the votes of intelligent mechanics. In many cases, the men who profess such great sympathy with workingmen, have hith-

erto been their worst enemies. They have spoken of them in the language of contempt—they have trodden them under foot—they have refused them the franchise—they have made laws directly against their interests. But when elections are at hand, and the votes of workingmen count for something, they represent themselves as the true friends of the workingman. “They desire to see him raised to a higher position in society—they demand for him better wages—less labor—more extended privileges ; in a word, they want workingmen to occupy seats in Parliament, and sit side by side with Knights and Baronets, making and unmaking laws, and basking in the smiles of Royalty !”

A few may be found in the ranks of our intelligent mechanics susceptible to such flattery and deceived by such absurd and insincere pretensions. But we are greatly mistaken if the large majority of the working classes do not heartily despise and loathe such political tricksters. The working classes, as they are called, are not so easily duped as certain demagogues imagine. They have been watching for years the conduct of certain fair-spoken legislators. That conduct they have found diametrically opposed to the opinions they profess to entertain, and subversive of the rights of working men. In these circumstances they are not likely to lend their influence, in placing men in power who fawn and flatter them, when dependent upon their votes, but who despise them when in office, and deprive them of their just and honest dues.

Meanwhile let those who contribute by manual labor to the resources of the country, assert the independence and incorruptibility of their character and principles, by thinking and acting for themselves, without the flatteries of time serving and insincere politicians. As the poet better expresses it :—

Ho ! ye who at the anvil toil,
And strike the sounding blow,
Where from the burning iron's breast,
The sparks fly to and fro.

Oh ! while ye feel 'tis hard to toil,
And sweat the long day through;
Remember it is harder still
To have no work to do.

Ho ! all who labor, all who strive,
Ye wield a mighty power,
Do with your might, do with your strength,
Fill every golden hour.
This glorious privilege to do,
Is man's most noble dower.
Oh ! to your birthright and yourselves,
To your own souls be true ;
A weary, wretched life is theirs
Who have no work to do !



Popular Amusements.

Their Use and Abuse.

“Hast thou found honey? Eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith and vomit it.”

—Proverbs 35, v 16.

POPULAR AMUSEMENTS.

HERE is no book so full of practical counsels as the book of Proverbs. It takes cognizance of every age, rank and condition of life. It points out not only the more flagrant sins of society, but also the more secret temptations against which it is our duty to guard, and gives directions, that faithfully followed, are sure to add to our happiness and welfare in the present and the future. Though written long ago, these Proverbs are adapted to every age, and approve themselves to every intelligent and candid mind.

The largest proportion of these Proverbs are addressed to youth. The dark experience of Solomon and the bitter remorse that followed, made him a fit teacher of others. Like beacons on mountain tops, or light houses along rock-bound coasts, that warn of coming danger, so Solomon stands out upon the page of history, sad evidence of the fact that genius, learning and wisdom are of little avail, without the safeguard of religious principle. As ships need ballast, to steady them on the ocean, so do men need the grace of God, to keep them beyond the reach of temptation and evil.

In one of these Proverbs, the wise king speaks as follows :— “Hast thou found honey? Eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith and vomit it.” Honey represents pleasure,—that which gratifies and pleases the mind, as honey does the sense of taste. But honey must be taken in moderation ; a surfeit of it is dangerous to our physical well-being. A little honey may be beneficial, but more than what is sufficient will make a man wretched. And so pleasures and pastimes, even though innocent in themselves, are not to be unduly or too frequently indulged in. They are intended not to oppress the mental powers, but to refresh and invigorate the higher energies of our nature ; to fit and not to disqualify for the real duties of life ; to be enjoyed in leisure moments, and not to fill up the entire measure of existence. Amusement is only lawful and allowable, for the sake of economising strength, or fitting us to discharge the obligations and bear the burdens of life. As a living writer says : “Mirth and music and wit belong to the class of stimulant : they are good seasoning, but poor food. Amusement is a piece of insertion put between solid fabrics, and is ornamental in connecting them. No amusement is good that unfits you for your regular duties in life ; it must not be a rival, but a servant ; it must give an appetite for duty. Amusement is a whetstone ; after it, the faculties should be sharper than they were before. The gayeties of society are extravagant, unnatural and unwholesome. Innocent dances under the trees in summer, or at home among friends, closing at an early hour, may be commended as not only harmless, but positively useful. But all-night parties and balls set at naught every rational principle ; they are condemned before they get half way up to moral consideration. They dissipate, not recreate ; they destroy the body they do not revive it ; they are a satire on amusement. Amusement should revive those faculties which regular work leaves dormant ; and not tax those powers which are overworked.”

Solomon, then, does not prohibit pleasure, but excess of pleasure—the abuse of what is in itself innocent, and as a matter of course all pleasures that are untimely—that tend directly or indirectly to the development of the mere animal nature—that take their rise in sinful passions, or lead to sin.

This teaching is in full accord with the spirit of christianity. The Bible nowhere rebukes nor prohibits innocent amusements. It does not say it is wrong to laugh, and, although different interpretations may be given of the inspired penman's words, it does not say that it is wrong to dance. I am not now passing any opinion on the more fashionable amusements of the day, but simply stating what every Bible reader knows, that the religion of Jesus Christ, so far from being a melancholy, gloomy, repulsive thing, is a cheerful, happy experience ; that so far from demanding seclusion from society, it recognizes the necessity of active commerce between man and man, and the fullest enjoyment of all that this fair world affords, and that our heavenly Father has provided to meet the wants of our complex nature.*

I say "complex nature," for man is the most wonderful, as he is the grandest of all God's creatures. There is within him reason, fancy, imagination, taste, the emotions of mirth and gladness, grief and sorrow. He is not a mass of matter unaffected by the influences of the outside world, but a delicately formed organism,

*Says Talmage, speaking of Christ's presence at the marriage of Cana of Galilee: "Christ was not impatient with the festal joy. He was the chief of the banqueters. When the wine gave out He supplied it ; and, so I take it, he will not deny us the joys that are positively festal, and that the children of God have more right to than any other people. Christianity don't clip the wings of the soul. I take christianity to be simply a proclamation from the throne of God of emancipation for all the enslaved. Yet men try to make us believe that God's children are on the limits, and the chief refreshments and enjoyments of life are for outsiders and not for his own children."

capable of being thrilled by a thousand different impulses. And God who has thus mysteriously framed his being, has provided in nature, in society, in art and literature and science, in communings with the seen and unseen world, all that is necessary for his happiness, and conducive to his comfort.

But while all men have these powers and emotions, they are variously developed. Some men are destitute of reason ; others have little or no imagination. The world to them is but a vast workshop, and beneath its barren surface they never penetrate. "There is no beauty nor mystery in the bloom and brightness or decay of nature ; the stars light up no worlds of wonder to their souls ; the seasons in their annual round wake up no sense of marvel"—as the poet has said of the unconscious, ignorant rustic who goes through the fairest scenes of nature unimpressed :—

In vain through every changeful year,
Did nature lead him as before ;
A primrose by a river's brim,
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more.

* * * * *
The soft blue sky did never melt
Into his heart ; he never felt
The witchery of the soft blue sky.

There was a hardness in his cheek,
There was a hardness in his eye,
As if the man had fixed his face
In many a solitary place,
Against the wind and open sky.

Others again are grave, serious, and solemn, not easily excited ; while many good and useful christian men and women are full of mirth—easily moved to laughter, and overflowing with good nature. Now it is not the part of the man void of fancy and imagination, to rail at or deprecate his neighbor's love of the ideal ; nor is it becoming in the man of grave and serious temperament, to denounce

the happy and mirthful tendencies of his brother. Both are but acting out the impulses put within them by an all-wise Creator. The one perchance finds complete relaxation from the labor of life in severe studies,—the other in the private or the more public assemblies of social life ; the one finds perfect enjoyment in fellowship with the mighty dead, the other in listening to the sweet sounds of music, or the sparkling utterances of eloquence, all of which help very materially to sweeten the machinery of life, and make men forget or overcome the petty sorrows of existence.

The hardest students and the most diligent merchants of the present day claim certain periods of perfect *abandon*, when books and ledgers are closed, and when unrestrained by the ordinary avocations of life, they can relax their energies. But for such relaxation, nature would succumb. Undue tension breaks the bow, and overmuch travel founders the fleetest and strongest steed, and so prolonged application of mind or body ends in brain disease and madness, if not in suicide. No man can steadily work for ten or twelve hours a day, from week to week, without paying the penalty of outraged nature. Mere drudgery, in which neither skill nor thought is demanded, may be performed for a much longer period, but solid work, directed by skill and demanding forethought and steady application, cannot be profitably continued beyond a certain point. "Profitableness in work depends not so much upon the number of hours, as upon the number of faculties concentrated in each ; upon how much mind you have been able to transform into work. Four hours work by a healthy mind, is better than twelve hours by one that is not invigorated by rest and amusement. It is with thought as with an axe, the sharp edge economizes strength—if sharp it cuts ; if dull it pounds. Half a man's time well put in, is better than the whole ; it is the concentration,—it is the cutting edge that achieves."

Thus far, there is very little difference of opinion among christians. The necessity of recreation and innocent amusements is

universally admitted. So far from seeking to reduce their number, we would gladly hail their increase. There are too few opportunities for healthy, rational recreation in our towns and cities. In many cases, business and mechanical pursuits,—the toils of the factory and workshop,—are so incessantly pursued, as to have a most deleterious effect upon the animal vigor of the young. Employers of all classes would consult their own interests and the welfare of their servants, if in some way the period of manual labor could be reduced, so as to admit of more exercise and recreation during daylight and in the open air, and thus preclude the necessity, which is pleaded, for devoting the hours of midnight to amusements of a dangerous character. It is folly to say that the young are never to enjoy themselves; that they are never to laugh, or romp, or play, or skate, or play ball and cricket, or indulge in the innocent pastimes of the parlor and the drawing-room. It is against nature and the wise ordination of a gracious Providence to find it so in any instance. So far from fitting our youth for the more staid and responsible duties of their subsequent life, such a cramping of their physical and emotional energies would produce a race, anything but fitted to increase the happiness of society, or creditably act their part in life. The cares and sorrows of riper years, the responsibilities and burdens of business and home, the disappointments and trials that are to be met with in every walk of life, will soon enough wrinkle the brow and sadden the heart, without encroaching upon the happy days of youth. But even innocent and lawful pleasures must be moderately indulged in. Admitting that the physical and mental energies demand relaxation—~~the~~ portion of time when manual labor shall be suspended and study abandoned—it is also to be borne in mind that recreation ceases to be recreation when it is more than an occasional indulgence. We eat in order to continue the physical part of our constitution in health—to sustain the body and enable it to perform its functions;

—not to pamper or satiate the appetite, or unduly oppress the organs of digestion. We drink when thirsty to quench our thirst, and not for drunkenness. So, in like manner, lawful pleasures and innocent recreations must be engaged in; not to kill time, or infuse a momentary delirium into the spirit, but to refresh our whole system and prepare it for future exertion. It must not intrude upon the hours of business or work—it must not be of such a character as to interfere with the time and thought necessary to the main pursuits of life. It is intended only to diversify and change our more serious and burdensome employments—to afford timeous relief to the overtired energies—but in no case to take the place which should be given to solid work. It must not even interfere with bodily repose, nor be allowed to exhaust by long continuance, nor should it be of that character which inflames and excites the passions, and indisposes us from returning to the ordinary avocations of life.

But there still remains the more difficult question, what pastimes and amusements are safe for christian men and women to engage in? What is consistent with a profession of religion? Are there any, that while innocent in themselves, should be avoided on the grounds of expediency? There are amusements so-called, which no christian man will for a moment defend, far less indulge in. The race-course, the gaming table, and the average character of theatrical representations, (which in our larger towns and cities pander to the lowest passions of humanity, and are often supported and patronized by men and women whose views of social obligations and whose practice of impurity are so radically opposed to the canons of morality, as to make them dangerous in any community), belong to that class. But leaving these out of sight, as matters regarding which we are all agreed, what shall we say of many others, that are rigidly condemned by some and as strongly advocated by others? One class of the religious world eschew the lec-

ture room, the concert room, and all assemblages outside the brotherhood of the saints. Others deem it no sin to attend the concert room, but regard it as a grievous wrong to listen to the same singer in operatic melodies. Some relish manly field sports, but condemn all indoor amusements, while others consider them as equally innocent, and above reproach. Some think it right and proper, in their own homes, to encourage and take part in games and charades and tableaux, and delight to see their children "speaking their pieces," and going through their dialogues, dressed in costume; but esteem it an offence against christian propriety, to countenance such amusements when put upon the stage by persons of mature age! With such diversity of opinion, who shall presume to act the part of judge, and frame a perfect code of laws for the guidance of the christian community!

I do not imagine that any definite rule, can be laid down in such matters. Wiser men than the writer have again and again attempted to specify what amusements are or are not in accordance with christian propriety, and have signally failed in securing anything like unanimity of sentiment on the subject. Good men differ in regard to such matters as they do in politics and theology. Churches make rules, and profess to be guided in the admission of members and the discipline of offenders by such rules, while practically they are a dead letter. And laws that cannot be enforced had far better not be made. If you cannot carry with you the individual conscience, you cannot hope to change the individual practice.

In regard, then, to this vexed question, I hold that christian men and women must regulate their conduct according to the dictates of an enlightened conscience. Each to his own master stands or falls. If we feel that we are the better physically, mentally and morally, by moderate indulgence in innocent pleasures, then whatever be the opinion of our fellow-men, or the views of

esteemed brethren who cannot see eye to eye with us in such matters, we have a right to use them—in so far as they invigorate and strengthen us for the severer toils, and the more arduous tasks of life, but no further. As it has been well put:—No amusement is innocent that hurts the participant, no matter whether it is right *per se* or not. Nothing is wrong in itself or right in itself,—that is right which does good, and that is wrong which does harm. What may be right for me may be wrong for my neighbor. Every man must discriminate, and select or reject pleasure, not by fashion or other people's experience, but according to its good or bad effect on himself.

There comes in next, the question of christian expediency. What I may or may not do is to be regulated, not simply by my own feelings or preferences, but by a consideration of the influence exerted upon the conduct of others. "No man liveth to himself." In a most important sense, we are our brother's keeper, and chargeable with his blood, if through our example he perish. "All things," says Paul, "are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not."

The young men and women of our land should ponder well the words already quoted. "Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith and vomit it." Habitual or even occasional attendance upon questionable places of amusement, or undue indulgence in innocent pleasure is productive of moral injury. No man can become physically strong, who lives on sweetmeats, and no man can attain a robust manhood by cultivating a taste for the more frivolous amusements of the present day. It is indeed, with certain amusements, as with the poisonous Manchineel, a tree which grows in the West Indies. Its appearance is attractive, and its fruit most beautiful to the eye. The apple, resembling a golden pippin, which hangs on its branches, looks very tempting and smells very fragrant, but to eat of it is

instant death, and its sap or juice is so poisonous, that if a few drops of it fall upon the skin, it raises blisters and occasions great pain. The Indians dip their arrows into the juice, that they may poison the enemies they wound. So sin, partially robed in fascinating colors, looks pleasing to the eye ; and men desire it, eat of it, and die. Many a promising young man has thus been ruined for time and eternity. Of such an one the poet says :

He was a lovely youth ! I guess
The panther in the wilderness,

Was not so fair as he.

* * *

A youth to whom was given
So much of earth, so much of heaven,
And such impetuous blood.

* * *

But ill he lived, much evil saw,
With men to whom no better law,
Nor better life was known.

* * *

His genius and his moral frame
Were thus impaired, and he became
The slave of low desires ;
A man who without self-control,
Would seek what the degraded soul
Unworthily admires

The spirit of frivolity that characterizes a large proportion of our Canadian youth is much to be regretted. It would seem as if there was little or no inclination for employment, pursuit or recreation, that calls into existence anything beyond the most superficial qualities of mind. Fashion, custom, public display, a love of the gaudy and glittering pleasures of the moment, are the prevailing tastes and passion of youthful society, although the mind be left barren and void of all refinement and cultivation. To dress like the upper classes—to imitate the customs and follow the foot-steps of those who are considered the leaders of fashion—is their study. Bible classes and Sabbath schools and christian associa-

tions are considered beneath their notice—an unnecessary part of modern education. What is the result? A race of men and women are growing up, very different from the sturdy pioneers of this western Canada of ours—men and women who with strong arms and heroic hearts cleared our forests, and laid the foundations of that fresh and vigorous nation which we now possess. Our fashionable follies are raising up men and women effeminate and feeble, both in mind and body—so artificial and unnatural in their habits as to be unfitted for the sober concerns of life. There is also a wilfulness at the present day characteristic of youth, which augurs ill for their future welfare in society ; in many cases sons and daughters, by their love of pleasure more than home, bring bitter sorrow into parents' hearts? No spot on earth should be so endearing and attractive as home, and no society preferable to a mother's. The time must come, when, with wisdom and years to warrant such a step, they shall leave the family circle and take an independent position in life ; but until that time arrives, the more frequently our young men and women are found around the hearthstone the better for themselves and the better for their friends. As society is now constituted, the years spent at home are brief at the longest, to learn those lessons of prudence, sobriety, and virtue, which are best taught by christian parents, without being unduly diminished by withdrawal to other scenes and indulging in dangerous sports.

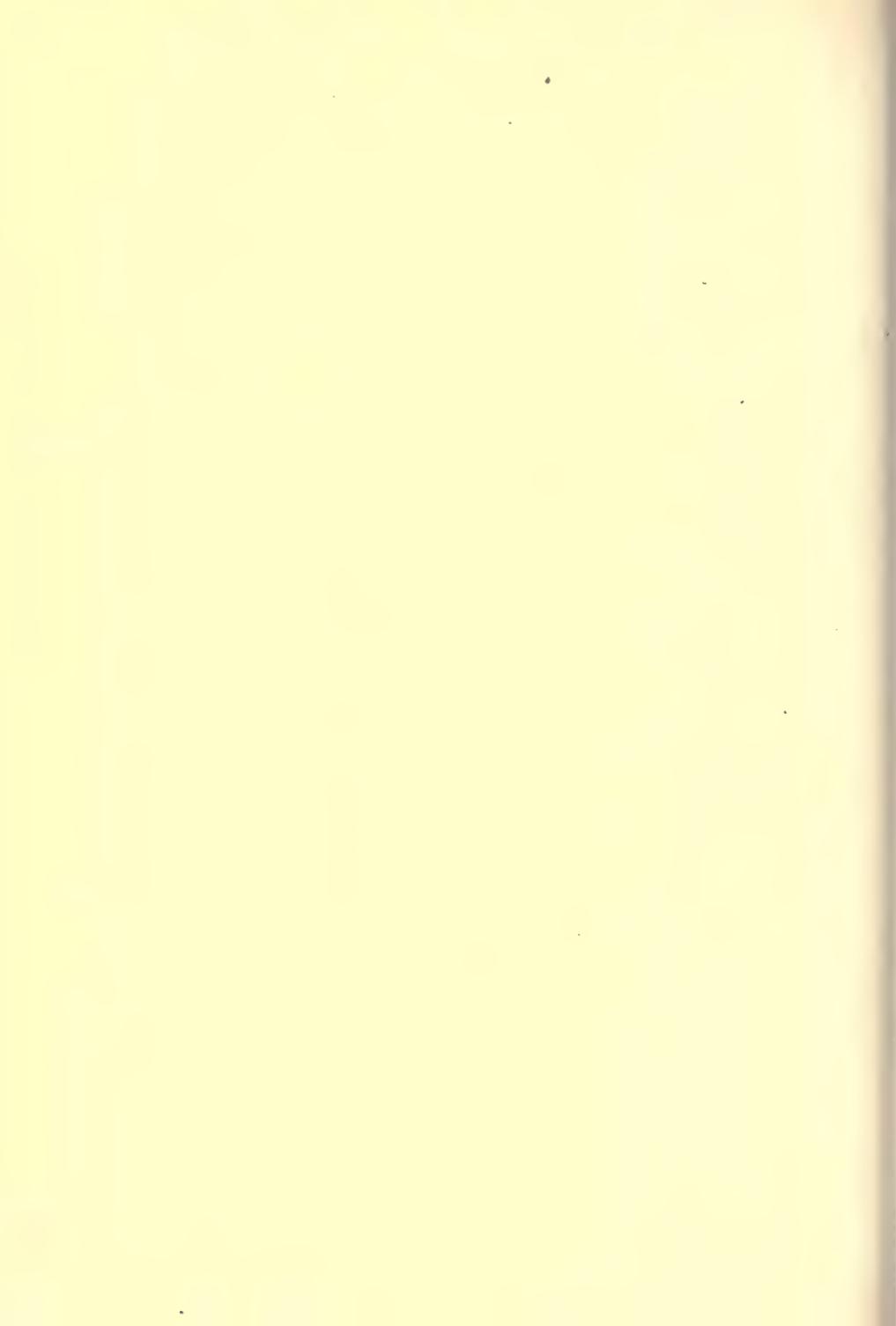
We speak thus with no bitterness of feeling, but in sorrow. We would have the young realize the value of life and the importance of redeeming the present hour. It is to be feared that some of our youth madly fondle pleasure and engage in unhallowed revelry, to drown the very thought of a hereafter. This sad tendency was strikingly illustrated in the case of Burton, a celebrated actor, who died a few years ago in New York. A year or two before his death he became alarmingly ill, and despaired of life. His physi-

cian told him he was affected with disease of the heart, which would inevitably prove fatal unless he abandoned the stage and gave up all his theatrical engagements. He advised him to retire on his abundant means, and lead for the short time he might be spared a life of ease, and one in harmony with his approaching end. His reply was:—"I cannot abandon the stage. It furnishes me with the excitement which I cannot live without. I should be driven to think of myself, and should go crazy." This was the secret of his continued active, volatile, and consuming life. It kept him from reflecting upon his condition, and he preferred it on that account, although it hastened his end. To forecast the future, while we moderately enjoy the present, is the dictate of reason and conscience. Those who thus act from day to day have the best assurance of a long, useful life, and a happy, peaceful death, unshadowed by dark reminiscences of mis-spent and wasted hours.

Finally, let me add, that the christian churches are guilty to a great extent, in promoting many of the questionable amusements of the present day, by condescending to the use of means for raising funds, in behalf of religious objects, altogether opposed to the spirit and the practice of the gospel. Is it not true that many religious people give their countenance to tableaux, charades, lotteries and other amusements of a questionable character? Is it not true that churches are desecrated by secular concerts and foolish exhibitions, in order to procure funds for the support of preaching the gospel, or the liquidation of church debts, and that men who make no profession of religion whatever and scoff at christianity, are importuned to assist in this way, what in other circumstances they despise? Until reformation begins in the house of God, we cannot expect that manifestoes or protests will be of any value in warning our youth against amusements—injurious and sinful in themselves, or because of their associations. Possibly I hold somewhat rigid notions regarding church buildings. Edifices erected for and con-

secrated to the worship of God, should, I apprehend, be devoted to such or kindred objects, and not given up to entertainments that had better be held in public halls ; and churches that cannot exist upon the free-will offering of the people, have no right in my opinion, to extort contributions from an unwilling public, by condescending to the use of means at variance with the teachings of the religion they profess.





Sceptical Objections TO PRAYER.

“What is the Almighty that we should serve him ? And what profit should we have if we pray unto him ?”

—Job 21, v. 15.

SCEPTICAL OBJECTIONS TO PRAYER.

IN THE context, Job tells us that this is the language of the wicked. They see no immediate benefit in serving God, and therefore refuse him rightful homage. And what was true in the earlier age of the world, is even more strikingly exemplified in the present day.

There are many, who, if they do not utter the atheistic sentiment of the text, cherish it secretly in their hearts, and live according to its belief. They have no regard for anything beyond the present. The thorough selfishness and sordidness of their nature despises the better blessings of the future. If prayer would increase their riches, add to their possessions, and meet the covetous desires of their hearts, none would be more frequently in the attitude of suppliants. But inasmuch as spiritual blessings first, and temporal blessings afterwards, is the order in which God answers prayer, and that the latter as a rule are only given where there is a proper appreciation of the former, the sensual worldling exclaims, "What profit should we have if we pray unto him?"

In the face of such blasphemous sentiments, it is worthy of remark, that men everywhere, both in pagan and civilized countries, have prayed, after their special modes. The Phœnician supplicates

Baal ; the Roman. Jupiter ; the Egyptian, the Nile ; and the Indian, the Great Unknown Spirit. As the poet says :

His untutored mind,
Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind.
His soul, proud science never taught to stray,
Far as the solar walk, or milky way ;
Yet simple nature to his hope has given
Behind the cloud-topped hill, an humbler heaven.

Rousseau, a professed atheist, speaks of a certain bewildering ecstacy which his mind experienced, as if in communion with an invisible power, causing him to cry out, "O, great Being ! O, great Being !" What does all this prove, but that in some form or other the act of prayer is inseparable from humanity. A universal feeling of dependence and weakness pervades all ranks and conditions of men, felt just as strongly where there is no faith in the true God as where there is, and compelling the creature to look beyond self for support. Men in the abundance of this world's favors, may affect to despise such feelings, but there comes a period in the history of the most defiant sinner, when he is driven for refuge and consolation to that God, whose very existence he formerly denied

Let us briefly state and answer a few of the more common objections to prayer, which are fittingly embodied in the language of the text.

Granted, says the sceptic, that there is a God, who created and governs the world, it is foolish to expect him to listen to the cries of all the creatures of his hand. Enthroned in the highest heavens —the central attraction of its lofty intelligences—Independent of the homage of man or angel, and ruling with absolute and unquestioned authority,—what madness to expect him to lend a listening ear to the prayers of mortals ? The pure angelic spirits that bow before his throne, "may catch his eye and obtain a transient recognition," but to imagine for a moment, that he is interested in

the endless round of human hopes and fears, that agitate the minds of men, is to degrade and insult the character of the eternal.

What is meant by such language? It is that God cannot, or will not condescend, to hear and answer prayer:—that while he disposes of the greater affairs of the universe, he cannot or will not trouble himself with the petty and insignificant details of human experience? If it is meant that God cannot then there is an end to debate, for the very idea of a God implies an omnipotent power—ability to rule over much or over little—an utter indifference, whether it be the affairs of one or a thousand worlds that solicit his attention. If he cannot attend to the separate wants of his creatures, then he cannot govern the world as a whole, for it is only by knowing the special demands of the individual that he can provide for the collective wants of the mass. Or does the objector mean that he will not stoop to listen to the myriad cries of his dependent creatures? Then in that case, he cannot be such a being as the Bible represents him to be—a God not only of matchless power, but also of infinite love—a God, who so far from creating man, and abandoning him to his fate, watches over him with an ever increasing and deepening interest, despite of guilt and wickedness which deserve the outpourings of vengeance. Or is it meant that this world is so insignificant, compared with other parts of creation, that it cannot share the interest of his infinite mind? It is true that this earth is small compared with the collected grandeur and glory of the divine workmanship. When we survey the heavens, which are the work of his fingers, the moon, and the stars which he has ordained, one may well exclaim, what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that thou dost visit him? But while in this aspect, our world appears insignificant, in other respects for aught we know, it may be the noblest work of God. Small though it be, it has been peopled by a race immortal in their nature. Man is but a little lower than the angels. That sun

which in its endless journey shoots forth heat and flames of light to attendant worlds, is not for a moment to be compared with the smallest orb that rolls in space, if but a single being treads its surface.

Herein lies the moral grandeur and significance of our world. It has been, and is still to be, the arena of events more momentous far than the page of history has recorded. God in human form has tabernacled among men. Redemption has been purchased. Paradise has been regained. Death has been despoiled of its terrors, and the grave of its victory. Yet a little while, and the son of God shall descend to crown his chosen ones with a deathless immortality, procured by his sufferings. Thus we conclude, that this earth, with all its inferiority, is still the grandest of all God's works, and that He not only can, but does hear the prayers of his children, when offered in a simple confiding faith.

But, continues the objector, granted that the Almighty is both able and willing to hear and answer prayer, how can He do so, in consistency with the arrangement of natural laws? Everything has been from all eternity ordained by God. Like the several links in a chain, so are the events of the world. No change can be made in a single instance, without leading to confusion in the whole. The world, like to a watch, was, so to speak, wound up by its Maker at creation. Certain laws were then established, and set in motion for the government of men and provision for their wants, and these cannot be set aside to meet every new emergency of the creature. Miraculous interposition, in answer to prayer, is thus an utter impossibility. A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature, and as our experience has established the unvarying uniformity of these laws, to believe in their suspension even for a single moment, in order that prayer may be answered, is alike opposed to common sense, as it is in 'direct conflict with the teachings of philosophy and science.

This is just a reproduction of the doctrine of Fate, as held by the ancients. Destitute of the knowledge of God, they ascribed the government of the world to a blind destiny, or necessity, personified. We, with clearer views of truth, recognize no such thing as Fate. Physical and moral laws are the ordination and creation of God. The question simply resolves itself into this:—Has the Creator no power over the thing created? Has the machinist no influence over that which is the work of his hand and the offspring of his brain? Can he not modify, regulate, increase, or retard its motion? Can he not even insert some new principle of action, without interfering with the general design and working of the machine? There can be but one answer to all such questionings. Most certainly, He who at first framed and fashioned this world, and so beautifully harmonized the laws of nature for the welfare of his creatures, can when occasion demands, change or modify their action. If you give to the mechanic the power to regulate the work of his hands, surely this much must be accorded the Almighty. If not, he has become the slave of nature. Answers to prayer, in whatever form they come, can never honestly be described as violations of the laws of nature. “These laws are nothing but the common operations of divine power in the government of the world, which depend entirely for their existence and continuance on the infinite will of the Creator. Miraculous interposition is nothing but the exertion of divine power, in a way different from that which is common,” but in perfect harmony, if we could only see it with the original design which the Almighty planned for the government of the world, and the continuous supply of his creatures’ wants.

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul.
He sees with equal eye, as God of all,
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall;
Atoms or systems into ruin hurled,
And now a bubble burst, and now a world.

But it may be replied, that our illustration or argument is not in all respects legitimate or logical. The chronometer and the machine of the artist or artizan, are not perfect. They are not regarded so by their framers. Improvements are to be expected, corresponding to the discoveries of science. But when God made the laws of nature, He made them perfect, and the idea of perfection precludes improvement. If perfection is stamped upon these laws, then prayer, however importunate, cannot induce the Almighty to change the order of the universe.

Our answer to this objection is, that while fully admitting the perfection of nature's laws at creation, it does not follow that they should serve every end, or supersede the necessity of prayer. And even granting that at the moment of creation these laws fully met all the wants of the creature, it does not follow that in man's sinful and fallen condition, they are equally efficient. God has not changed, or if the sceptic prefers it, Nature has not changed, but man has changed. Man and Nature are now in conflict. His condition is no longer sinless and happy, but guilty and miserable. To meet his new wants and ameliorate his sufferings, why may not the Almighty influence nature, changing and modifying its operations, in accordance with man's altered condition? Without presuming to enquire into the secret things of God, or be wise above what is written, one or two methods may reverently be suggested, in virtue of which God can answer prayer, in perfect harmony with the laws of nature.*

(a) God may influence the laws of nature without either arresting or changing their known arrangements. We can trace back the operations of nature but a very little way. Beyond this limit, how easy it is for God to interpose without our knowledge

* See *The Rationale of Prayer*, by Rev. Dr. G. C. Hutton, of Scotland, where this train of thought is admirably presented.

(b) Why may not prayer and its answer be joined together as cause and effect? May not the omniscient God, who foresees every prayer that is offered, so arrange it, that the blessing asked shall come in connection with the prayer offered, while at the same time the laws of nature remain as the medium of its transmission?

(c) Or may we not believe, that prayer and its answer, form a separate law of nature—the answer to our prayers coming, as the result of laws arranged for this very purpose? If we accept this explanation, then the Almighty need not interpose by miracle or otherwise, but simply by the agency of separate laws, in perfect harmony with the operations of Nature, answer the prayers of his children. If, as has been remarked, there is a way by which God can answer prayer, without disturbing his own laws, it is safest to conclude that this is the actual method employed.

If the possibility of prayer being answered is still denied—if it is affirmed, that the doctrine of foreordination is so rigid, that nothing but what is thus predestinated can happen, and that everything must happen, independent of human exertion or prayer, then we reply, that such a theory would put an end to every form of human endeavor. Why need a man labor, if he shall receive, independent of effort? Why should the husbandman till the ground and sow his seed? Why should the merchant busy himself in his counting house or on the exchange? Why, in a word, need any man plan for the future, seeing that all things thus foreordained must come to pass, according to the iron law of necessity? Surely the statement of such a doctrine is all that is needed to ensure its condemnation! It is a mere pretext put forth by wicked men, to conceal their hatred of the Almighty, and their unwillingness to admit their dependence upon his supreme omnipotence, unerring wisdom, and fatherly care.

But why prolong such a discussion in the hearing of christian men? The pious heart seeks not to know how prayer is answered,

being fully convinced of the fact. Every good man knows by experience, the profit that results from communion with his Maker. For prayer is not to be valued simply by the external blessings conferred upon the suppliant. There is, besides, an inward subjective effect—a composure of mind and tranquility of soul beyond expression;—a peace and joy and rapture, which the world can neither give nor take away. The christian rises from his knees, with his countenance irradiated with heaven's glory, as was the face of Moses, when he descended from the mount. The character of the praying saint assumes a beauty, and emits a fragrance otherwise unknown. Life, despite of its woes and sorrows, is rendered divine, and the soul prepared for the unbroken and sinless fellowship of heaven.

That believers have always such strong confidence in the efficacy of prayer, I do not assert. There are times when God seems to cast off his people—when the promise tarries—when they cry and are not heard—when their importunity seems to avail nothing—when they are so beset with trouble, and so persistently baffled in their purposes, that they almost despair and stagger on the very brink of apostacy. Weak faith cries out:

If I could only surely know
That all these things that tire me so
Were noticed by my Lord—
The pangs that cut me like a knife,
The lesser pains of daily life,
The noise, the weariness, the strife,—
What peace it would afford !

I wonder if he really shares
In all my little human cares,
This mighty King of kings;
If He who guides each blazing star,
Through realms of boundless space afar,
Without confusion, sound or jar,
Stoops to these petty things.

But to all such enquiries, there comes at last perfect trust and unshaken confidence. The darkness is scattered and the language of full assurance is attained :

Dear Lord, my heart hath not a doubt
That Thou dost compass me about
With sympathy divine.
The love for me once crucified
Is not a love to leave my side,
But waiteth ever to divide
Each smallest care of mine.

Beneath the skeptical sneers of the age at prayer, there lies the prior question, is there a God at all? I know that some men who profess to have implicit faith in the existence of a supreme being, deny the efficacy of prayer, save in so far as it has a reflex influence upon the suppliant. But surely if there is a God, his ability to hear and answer prayer must be admitted. We cannot philosophically separate the two things. If there is no God, then most certainly prayer is a mockery. But who that takes the most cursory glance at this wisely appointed and curiously fashioned material world, can deny the existence of a creating and presiding deity? Have you ever stood in a serene summer midnight, under the blue dome of the heavens? The sky is without a cloud, the moon is gradually waning at the distant approach of dawn, and the attendant stars add to the scene a brilliancy all their own. Almost imperceptibly, the faint streaks of returning day shoot across the horizon, the smaller stars like little children sinking first to rest, followed by the brighter constellations. "Steadily the wondrous transfiguration goes on. Hands of angels hidden from mortal eyes shift the scenery of the heavens until the glories of night dissolve into the glories of the dawn. Faint streaks of purple blush along the sky: inflowing tides of morning light bathe the entire celestial concave in one great ocean of radiance, until finally a flash of fire blazes out from above the horizon, turning the dewy

tear drops of flower and leaf into rubies and diamonds. The everlasting gates of the morning are now thrown wide open, and the lord of day, arrayed in glories too severe for the gaze of man, begins his course." Such a scene—one of many—that evoke the admiration and adoration of the most stolid and unimpassioned, is surely in itself overwhelming demonstration as to the existence of a God. But I am told that this first great cause has now withdrawn from all further superintendence of his works, and left his creatures to be the sport and pastime of wayward passions, and the victims of a fierce despair, that hurries them to the grave, without a ray of light, or a gleam of hope upon their rugged pathway! No, it cannot be. As Bryant beautifully soliliquizes, when looking at a wild water-fowl passing over him in the twilight :—

Whither, midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far through their rosy depths dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way ?

There is a power whose care
Teaches thy way along the pathless coast,
The desert and illimitable air,
Lone wandering, but not lost.

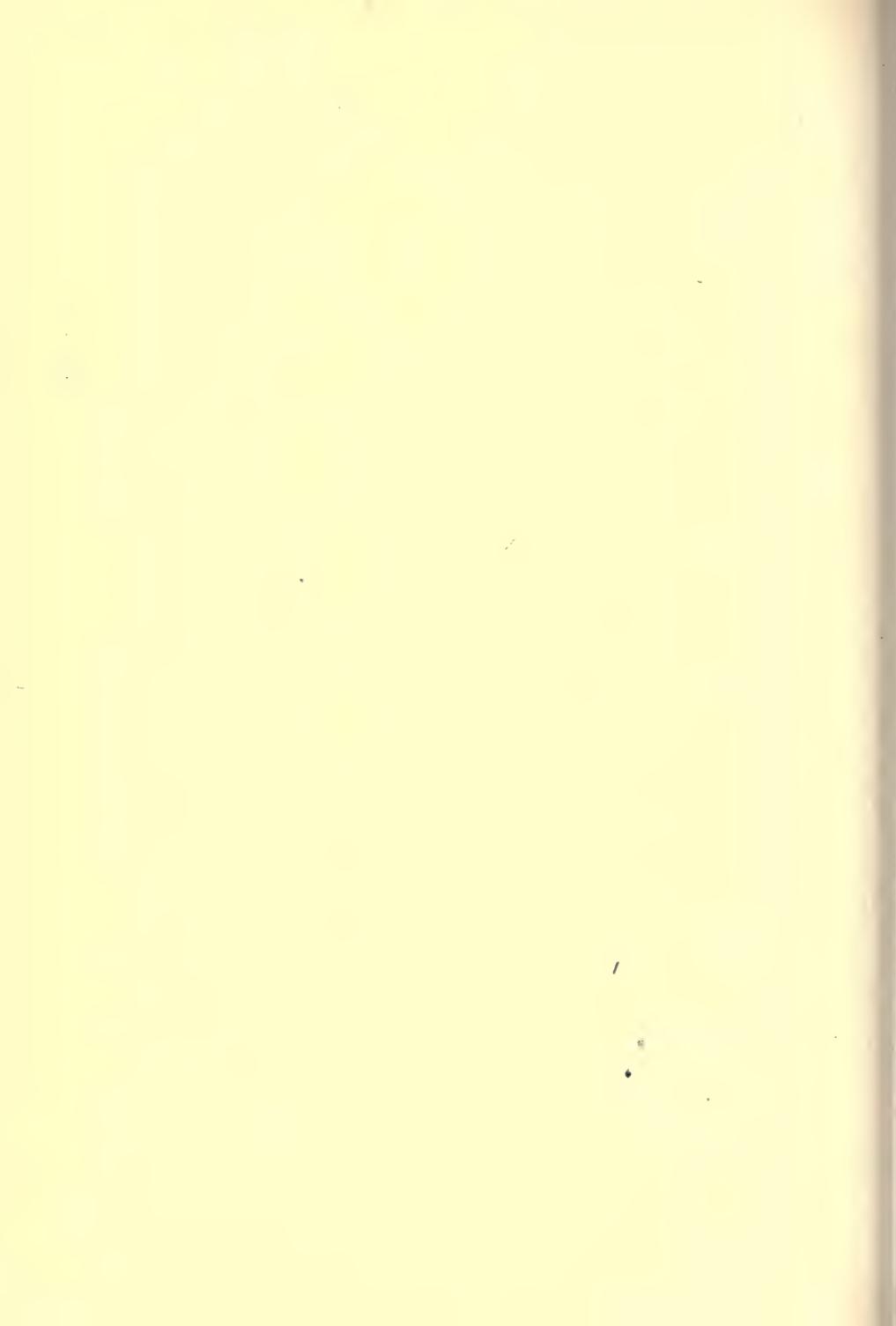
He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright.

There are some, doubtless, who have no such sceptical opinions regarding prayer, yet still neglect it. Perhaps they have omitted the duty so long, that they feel ashamed to begin again. That same cowardice, which prevents many from professing Christ, follows them into the secrecy of the family. At times conscience troubles them, and they resolve no longer to live in such wilful neglect of God, but under the whisperings of Satan, that their motive cannot be sincere, they continue to live strangers to a throne

of grace. Others neglect prayer, because of alleged inability. Their early educational advantages have not been of such a nature as to qualify them for the exercise, in what they regard as a becoming manner. They have not the language in which to convey their thoughts and express their feelings. In certain families, also, differences of religious opinion between parents, or rather the lack of religion on the part of one or both, prevents family worship. To all such let me say, that neglect of known duty in the past is no excuse for continued refusal. The longer a man has practised indifference, the sooner should he reverse his conduct. Repentance, however late, if sincere, is acceptable, and prayer offered at the eleventh hour can secure the favor of heaven. The value of prayer consists not in the language, but in the spirit that animates the petitioner. The unuttered breathings of the soul ; the silent sobs of the bruised and broken spirit ; the rude, unlettered speech of the half-civilized barbarian—the broken and feeble accents of childhood and infancy, are as pleasing in the sight of God as the chaste and fervent prayers of the matured christian or the scholarly divine.

Finally,—No man should argue against the efficacy of prayer, until he has proved by infallible tests, that it is worthless. Arrogant blasphemers content themselves with scoffs and sneers, which are of no value, as against the experience of one believing soul. If prayer is a mere form, then the scriptures are false throughout, and the testimony of Old and New Testament saints unreliable. But it is not so. A sound philosophy echoes the poet's words :

More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer,
Both for themselves and those who call them friend ?
For so the who'e round earth is every way,
Bound by gold chains, about the feet of God.



What are the Marks
OF A
GENUINE REVIVAL ?

“O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years: in the midst of the years make known: in wrath remember mercy.”

—Habakkuk 3, v. 2.

MARKS OF A GENUINE REVIVAL.

HE prophecy of Habakkuk was uttered some six hundred years before the advent of Christ. It refers to the invasion of Judea by the Chaldeans, and foretells the total overthrow of the Babylonish Empire, and the ultimate deliverance of God's own chosen people. The prophet's heart sinks within him, as he rolls back the curtain that veiled the future, and reveals the approaching vengeance of an angry God. "Why dost Thou show me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance?" He next proceeds to set forth in vivid colors, the flagrant violations of God's law of which the nation was guilty. For their pride, their covetousness, their sensuality and their cruelty, it was necessary that God should vindicate His holiness, and visit them with judgment. Then follow the words of the text. Before, he has been addressing man, or listening in the presence of Jehovah. Now he seeks relief from his agony of soul in importunate prayer. "O Lord, I have heard Thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive Thy work in the midst of the years; in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy."

The entire prophecy contains passages unequalled for sublimity of conception and grandeur of illustration, but the portion contained

in this third chapter excels in the boldness and rapidity of its flights, and the magnificence of its imagery. The prophet stands as mediator between a guilty nation and an angry God. In the spirit of a true patriot, while he loves his country, he conceals not her faults. It was just possible that God might yet put forth His hand and save. True, the Chaldean army had already begun the work of destruction, but that same power, which in former days had baffled mighty armies, could defeat their plans, and bring to naught their councils. "The Lord is strong and mighty: the Lord is mighty in battle."

The meaning of the prayer is obvious. The work spoken of is twofold. (a) The bestowment of grace upon his chosen but back-sliding people, and (b) their deliverance from the might of the oppressors. "Perfect the work of rescuing Thy people from captivity; do not let the promises made of old to their fathers lie dead; sanctify those terrible calamities to the nation's good, and at the same time revive the nation's piety. Now that our afflictions are at their height, put forth Thy power, and glorify Thy name." To the same purport are the words of Psalm 80, v. 14-19, when the Psalmist prayed that God's favor might again be extended to the nation, and the desolate vineyard restored to its former beauty.

In its general application, the text teaches us these important truths:—

I. A revival of religion is always God's own work. Apart from His gracious aid, no revival is possible. It is only as churches and individuals are acted upon by the supernatural power of God's Holy Spirit, that saints are comforted, refreshed and stimulated, and sinners awakened, quickened, convicted and converted. "Restore unto me the joys of Thy salvation; then will I teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee."

There is unspeakable comfort in this thought. The work is not man's, but God's. He is pledged to its success. It cannot

fail. Its advancement depends not upon the caprice of individuals, but on the sworn decree of God himself. Redemption in its conception, progress and results, is all of grace. He at first out of His infinite love, decreed salvation for the human family ; He still makes the free offer to guilty sinners, and by His spirit inclines the heart to seek after pardon. His promise to complete the work and prosper every instrumentality that has for its aim the conversion of the world, is our best plea at the mercy seat, when asking God to bless His people. "Revive THY work ; wilt THOU not revive us again, that Thy people may rejoice in Thee."

II. A revival of religion implies a previous languid, and lifeless state of spiritual existence. Where there is life and activity there is no need for revival. When a person faints away and is restored to consciousness the word is applicable. Or when the almost drowned or suffocated are restored to animation we use the same term. It is the word that can only be legitimately applied to a living being. That which never lived before cannot be revived. Those who have never had the divine life in their soul cannot properly be quickened. In their case, there must first be the implanting of the new principle of grace, before there can be any impulses Godward and heavenward.

A revival of religion thus implies, that the mass of professing christians are indifferent and unconcerned ; careless regarding the progress of spiritual life in their souls, or in the souls of others. Personal piety is decaying and drooping ; ordinances are lightly valued ; private and social prayer is formal and irregular. "The eye of faith is dim and overcast, and seldom flashes with holy joy ; the spiritual countenance is hollow and sunken with doubts and fears, the tongue of praise is partially paralyzed, and has little to say for Jesus ; the spiritual frame is lethargic ; a horrible numbness and dreadful insensibility prevades the entire being.

Nor is it necessary to be in this perilous condition, that the mass of church members should be guilty of flagrant sins. Many seem to think, that so long as the Sabbath is moderately observed and ordinances stately administered, nothing can be seriously wrong. There never was a greater mistake. Apathy and unconcern are ominous of danger. It is when the atmosphere is sultry, and not a breath of wind moves the trees, and life seems a very burden, that the elements of nature break loose, and the lightning flash and thunderbolt work saddest havoc in the world. So drooping and decaying spiritual life, is the precursor of God's vengeance and awful wrath.

That we need a revival of religion who will deny? As a nation we have for a long period been highly favored. Quiet Sabbaths, abundant ministerial service, social meetings for prayer, and Sabbath school instruction, are but a few of our many blessings. We have worshipped according to the dictates of conscience, none daring to molest us, and not as in other days, when God's elect ones, hid themselves in dens and caves, from the wrath of man. And yet what is our condition to-day? Have our privileges been improved and valued as they might have been? In some few cases doubtless, christians have entered upon the higher christian life. Here and there brands are being plucked from the burning and dry bones inspired with the energy of the spirit, but where has been the progress in spiritual things, and those ingatherings to the fold of Christ, that might have been expected?

III. A revival is possible. What is beyond man's power in the realm of nature, is easy of accomplishment with God, and there are no impossibilities in the sphere of grace. That same power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead and Lazarus from the tomb, is almighty to revive His church. That church can never perish. It has in times past survived the fiercest opposition. The fires of

persecution cannot extinguish it. The maledictions of tyrants and the anathemas of devils cannot quench the Spirit's power.

But in order to a genuine revival of religion, as has already been implied, the church must look to a higher power than human agency. The vital spark comes from heaven. When the inhabitants of Judea sicken on the plains, they climb the hills and breathe the more bracing air of the upper regions. And so languid souls need to get nearer God. We must drink from the fountain head, and not at human cisterns. We must not rest upon the eloquence of man, but look to the great Head of the church, who anoints with the heavenly oil, and transforms human language into the voice of God. Vital godliness is never aided by excitement, by crowded meetings, by startling paradoxes, but by the opening of the windows of heaven, and the refreshing breezes of the Spirit. When Elijah was distressed, because of the impiety of the Israelites, and hid himself in the cave, he was commanded to go forth and stand upon the mount of God, and then mark what followed. "Behold the Lord passed by, and a great strong wind rent the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind ; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake ; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire ; and after the fire a "still small voice." It was the still small voice, and not the earthquake, nor wind, nor fire, that brought comfort and peace and hope to the prophet's soul !

But it may be replied, if revivals of religion are so directly and entirely the work of God's spirit, then there is nothing for man to do, but to stand idly by and fold his arms ! By no means. Spiritual blessings are given in answer to prayer. Revivals of religion never come to churches or individuals, who are either indifferent or reluctant to receive them. If we are to witness a genuine revival, it will be brought about by earnest importunity at a throne of grace. On our knees we must implore God's long-suffering mercy. We

must mourn and fast in godly sorrow, and seek in the language of the text, that in the midst of deserved wrath, God may remember mercy. No real revival of religion ever took place without deep confession of sin, and a sincere feeling of our utter unworthiness in the sight of God.

In the moral government of Jehovah, and the administration of His affairs on the earth, there is a calling of churches and individuals to judgment. He that walks among the seven golden candlesticks, marks our conduct. If year after year he has lavished upon us more than ordinary care and no fruit appears upon the branches, the great husbandman will assuredly say: "Cut them down, why cumber they the ground?" God in his infinite mercy, prevent such a fearful end!

What then are some of the legitimate and invariable results of a genuine revival of religion?

(a). A deepening and rejoicing conviction of our safety in Christ. Assurance is possible and to be sought after. Its absence, however, does not prove God's displeasure. Plants in the sunshine and trees by living waters are green and flourishing. Such should be the condition of all God's people after a season of revival. A man who has been in doubt as to his physical soundness wears a smile upon his face when assured by his physician that all is well. And so a sense of reconciliation to God, and the enjoyment of his favor should make the step firm and the heart glad.

(b) More consistent living on the part of professing christians. It has been well said, that a revival that does not exalt and ennable business life, political life, social life, and home life, is unworthy of the name. Religion is for the school-girl at her studies, the apprentice or workman at the bench, the merchant in the store, the banker at his desk, the physician in his visits, the advocate at the bar, the teacher in his class-room, the sailor before the mast, the pilot at the helm, as well as the sufferer upon a bed of languishing, or nearing the

portals of eternity. Religion is a thing to be lived day by day, on Monday as well as on Sunday. Longfellow beautifully says, that the warm days in spring bring forth passion flowers and forget-me-nots ; but it is after midsummer, when the days grow shorter and hotter, that fruit begins to appear. And thus it is with seasons of revival. Their value is not always seen at the time, nor their genuineness proved by the numbers of professedly re-animated christians, but by the character of their future lives. After a heavy rain or freshet, the water for a while finds unaccustomed beds in isolated pools ; but when the rain ceases, if not fed by some perennial spring, the water eventually subsides to its standard level into the familiar lakes and streams, and the unsightly gulleys and gorges that have been washed out by the sudden torrent, and where so lately they carried a seemingly irresistible flood are left so many fetid and pestilential swamps. And so, unless the soul is continuously replenished by a living stream of heavenly impulses and holy aspirations, its high and noble resolutions will come to naught, until at last there is nothing left "but the unsightly gorge of memory that marks where the rills of grace so lately ran."

Need I say that the preaching of the Sabbath is either intensified or nullified by the practice of the week. The minister by one careless act may destroy the labors of a year, and the membership by unholy and frivolous conduct bring religion into contempt and drive souls to hell.

(c) Intensified, individual effort. In many churches the zeal of the members is at and below zero. They have never gathered a single sheaf into the Lord's garner house, and never seriously attempted it. In churches of a thousand members nine hundred are asleep. This is surely not as it should be. A revived christian is a man who is not satisfied with his own interest in Christ ; but realizing that men around him are dying unsaved, he seeks to

bring them into the ark of safety. He acts as a man in earnest to rescue souls from eternal destruction.

It is stated on good authority that the statistics of the evangelical churches in the United States for the past twenty-five years show an average of two souls converted every year. And in these same congregations there are on an average four or five deaths. What a commentary upon the sincerity of the christian church !

Revival work must then be judged, not by the number of converts made, but by its permanent fruits. The world has a right to expect, after a season of refreshing, that men and women bearing the name of Christ will be characterized by the loftiest self-sacrifice and most self-denying acts in behalf of the faith they profess : "That in the exercise of such virtue as patience, power and love they will help the helpless, comfort the comfortless, restore the erring, bring back the wanderers, and kindle fresh life in despairing souls."

(d). As a result of a genuine revival, there should be a purer atmosphere in the community, a higher standard of honesty, more integrity, more honor, more upright dealing, greater consistency and circumspection in the ordinary details of life. It is a constant subject of remark, and not without reason, that in certain localities, seasons of extraordinary zeal and singular devotion are followed by periods of absolute disregard of the commonest laws of morality ; when prominent leaders, from ministering at the altar, sink to the lowest level of the ungodly and bring grievous scandal upon the church of Christ. Making all allowance for the scoff of the infidel, who stigmatizes all religious enthusiasm as hypocrisy and pretense, and exaggerates the short-comings of the weak and erring disciple, the fact is patent, that religion is too often made a passport to position. Sudden declension from the faith, and marked irregularities in business life, are not the fruits of religion. The revival

has been spasmodic, where such things are found, the product of ~~sinful~~ man, and not the work of God.

(e) If our church and our land were to experience such a glorious season, our ministers, like the apostles, would preach more earnestly and more effectually. "The pulpit would become warmed up," and the minister become a flame of fire in God's service. So it was in the case of Peter. He had often preached before to attentive congregations, but after the "Baptism of Fire," he preached with supernatural power, and the result was proportionate to the power exerted. Our churches and congregations would not only increase, but be characterized by a spirit of earnest enquiry and alarm. Men and women, now Sabbath breakers and scoffers at religion, would feel themselves unconsciously drawn to the house of God, and would be forced to cry out, "What must we do to be saved?" The services of the sanctuary would become more and more impressive, and the words of the preacher pierce more keenly the hardened conscience. The house of prayer would become invested with a new solemnity, and the language of Jacob be that of every heart, "How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this **is** the very gate of heaven." Our noon-day prayer meetings, and our week evening prayer meetings would be crowded. Excuses, which now keep christians away, would no longer be tenable—our prayers would be characterized by unwonted power and force—the conversation of christians would be all about religion—not about the preacher; his style; his eloquence; his excellencies or defects; but as to the application of his words to their individual souls. The prophecy of Malachi would then be fulfilled, and they "that fear the Lord speak often one to another." Every season of communion at a mercy seat would be longed for, as the most interesting moment in life, and the most blessed season of christian experience. The ungodly world would soon also reap the benefit of such a revival. Like the sceptical unbelieving Jews,

in the days of Peter, for a while, as in recent times, it might be incredulous, and characterize it as enthusiasm and fanaticism. But, by and by, the swelling tide of grace would reach the most abandoned sinners. Organic reformation would end in real conversion. Commercial dishonesty, reckless speculation, and political corruption would in a great measure cease. Anarchy, confusion, fraternal recrimination, threatened war and bloodshed would be averted, and the nation as a unit, joined. Province to province, and brother to brother, in the bands of christian love, we would go forward for the enlightenment and emancipation of a groaning world. The church, collectively, would feel its power. Denominationalism would be lost sight of, in so far as it hinders the spread of Bible truth. Disputes about words and forms would be hushed to silence, and like a solid phalanx, the church would march on to victory, and storm the citadel of Satan. The clarion note from distant lands would chord with the joyous praises of the church at home, and uniting with the redeemed around the throne, swell the song of redemption's dawn.

Why do I speak so? that the members of this church are worse than others? I trust not. But because we all need the quickening influence of God's spirit to make us in our individual and church relations to the world a greater power for good. Are we, brethren, satisfied with the state of religion that exists? Are not many of God's children convinced that their attitude and example, in presence of the frivilous and foolish and idle portion of the community, is not what should be expected from those who belong to the communion of saints? At the present day, when a choice has to be made between the church and the world, the church goes under. A man is accounted a fool who leaves a secular engagement in the interest of religion. The prayer meeting has no chance as against the concert room, the theatre, or the social gathering. A decent, formal, moral life (and not, I fear, always so), is deemed sufficient

to secure entrance to and honor in the church. Those who ought to be distinguished for their sanctity of deportment and consuming anxiety for the prosperity of Zion deem it no discredit to be numbered among the vain and pleasure seeking throng, of whom the apostle says: "Many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you, even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, whose mind earthly things." No amount of professed reverence for God's house can atone for such conduct. The Almighty demands purity in the inward parts and consistency of the life. To the hypocrite and backslider He says: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations: incense is an abomination unto me. Your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. When ye spread forth your hands I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers I will not hear." If such a condition of things exist, well may we say: "Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah!"

I have thus far been trying to awaken reflection in God's own people for their own safety, and arouse them to earnest endeavor to save the perishing. What shall I say to unconverted souls, ere I close? Said Robert Murray McCheyne, when mourning over the want of spiritual life in Scotland: "Dear unconverted sinners, ye little know how much you are interested, in that this should be a time of reviving from the presence of the Lord. It is not our part to tell you of coming judgments—of fire from heaven, or fire from hell; but this we can plainly see, that unless the Spirit of God shall come down on our parishes, like rain on the mown grass,

many souls that are now in the land of peace, shall soon be in the world of anguish. There may be no sudden judgment ; fire and brimstone may not be rained down from heaven, as upon Sodom ; the earth may not yawn to receive her prey, as in the camp of Israel ; but Sabbath breakers, liars, swearers, drunkards, unclean persons, formalists, worldlings and hypocrites, yea all Christless souls, will quickly slip away, one by one, into an undone eternity." You believe in a day of wrath, of awful moment to every immortal soul. Are you ready for it ? Robert Pollock had a glimpse of that day—for which all other days are made—and thus describes it :

Begin the woe, ye woods, and tell it to the doleful winds,
And doleful winds wail to the howling hills,
And howling hills mourn to the dismal vales,
And dismal vales sigh to the sorrowing brooks,
And sorrowing brooks weep to the weeping stream,
And weeping stream awake the groaning deep ;
Ye heavens, great archway of the universe, put sackcloth on ;
And ocean, veil thyself in garb of widowhood,
And gather all thy waves into a groan, and utter it,
Long, loud, deep, piercing, dolorous, immense,
The occasion asks it, Nature dies, and angels come to lay her in
her grave.



Is the Christian Church
OF TO-DAY APOSTOLIC ?

“They continued stedfastly in the Apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers: daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart; and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”

—Acts 2, v. 42, 46, 47.

IS THE CHURCH OF To-DAY APOSTOLIC?

THE outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, as recorded in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, has ever been a subject of the greatest interest to the Church of Christ and individual believers. It not only proves the faithfulness of the Saviour's promise, that "the Comforter" would come, but it gives us constantly to hope for similar manifestations in all ages of the church. Before his crucifixion, the Saviour comforted his downcast disciples with the assurance that "the Spirit of truth" would come and guide them into all truth. But before His coming, it was necessary that He should depart. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth ; it is expedient for you that I go away ; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." Again, after the resurrection, in the evening of the first day of the week, "when the doors were shut," Christ appeared to these same disciples, and reassured them of the coming of the Holy Spirit. "Peace be unto you : as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Again, upon a mountain top in Galilee, we find Him with the eleven disciples, giving them their commission, and uttering His farewell benedic-

tion. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world, amen." But before engaging in their great work, they must wait for the Saviour's ascension, and the promised baptism of fire. They must "tarry in the city of Jerusalem, until endued with power from on high," and "wait for the promise of the Father;" and finally, after rebuking their ignorance, as to the spiritual character of the Messianic kingdom, which they were about to establish in the world, and immediately before his ascension, he foretells their future glorious ministry—a ministry, not to be confined to Palestine or the borders of the Holy Land, but embracing the entire world. "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

The second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles gives the fulfilment of the promise. The Saviour has now ascended. The disciples are now assembled in the upper room at Jerusalem—their master has gone—their hearts are full of sorrow—but still they plead for the promised outpouring. Christ's absence did not weaken their faith, nor lessen the earnestness of their prayers; nor should the absence of the Saviour weaken the faith of pious hearts, who are looking forward to his second coming. Day after day passes, but the looked for and longed for blessing tarries. The first day of the week has again dawned upon the world, but the promise remains unfulfilled. Still they wait. Anxious as the disciples were to enter upon their work, they must abide "the baptism of fire," to confirm their ministerial vocation.

At last, the day of Pentecost comes around. The little christian church is again assembled with one accord in one place, when sud-

denly there comes a sound from heaven, as of a mighty rushing wind, and it fills all the house where they are sitting. It was not the product of human power, nor felt elsewhere out of that little circle, but sent direct from heaven. A mysterious silence broods over the little company—they were all filled with the Holy Ghost—every eye glistens—every countenance becomes irradiated—every heart inflamed with love, and every tongue loosened to declare God's glory. No marvel that the multitude were confounded at such a scene, and ascribed the revival to other causes than the Holy Spirit. They had not heard the promise of the Saviour, nor did they remember the prophecy given long before by the mouth of the prophet Joel. "It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams."

In the days of the Apostles there was a necessity for an outpouring of the Spirit. Christ came not so much to fully organize and establish the church, as to select and train those who should, after his ascension. For the great work of preaching the gospel, something more was needed than a certain amount of doctrinal knowledge. Intellectual qualifications—a clear discernment of the truths of Scripture—was not enough. The disciples needed a baptism of the Holy Spirit. It was necessary that the faith of the disciples should be strengthened and confirmed in the new religion by overwhelming evidences;—it was necessary that the truths of Christianity, despised and reproached, should be attested by signs and wonders, not less than the conversion of souls; and it was necessary that the little band of christian converts, who met day after day in the upper room at Jerusalem, should have their hearts encouraged, and their numbers largely increased.

The reality of the day of Pentecost is not founded alone upon the mysterious transactions of that day. There is given us a full

and detailed account of the subsequent history of the little apostolic church, from which we can easily gather the permanency of the change that took place on the occasion referred to. In addition to the fact stated, that they gladly received the word and were baptized, it is recorded that they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers ; that a most tender bond of christian love bound all the members together, so that they were rather members of one family than of a church ; that a common interest and sympathy pervaded all ranks and classes, and that thus carrying out into practical life the principles of our holy religion, the Lord continued to add daily to the church such as should be saved.

The evidences of the supernatural and astounding presence of God's spirit on the day of Pentecost, then, are these : Steadfast continuance in the truth, regular attendance upon the means of grace and the special ordinances of God's house, and a degree of fellowship and tenderness of dealing the one towards the other, as has never before been seen in that assembly. These are still the only evidences that we can look for of a genuine revival, and they are amply sufficient to confirm our faith in the reality of the work.

It has been remarked that churches and individuals, graciously revived, have been more tenacious than ever of sound doctrine. They may not have preached in a forbidden aspect, the mysterious truths of an evangelical creed, but none the less have they valued them as of inestimable importance and unspeakable comfort. A church truly revived has no tendency to laxity, it has no sympathy with that false liberalism which regards one creed as good as another, provided a man means well and does well ; it has no place for those who call in question fundamental truths, or tone down the more awful declarations of scripture against the sinner, because they grate harshly upon the delicate ear of modern society. On the contrary, piety quickened, enlightened and strengthened by the

outpouring of God's spirit, holds with a firm grasp eternal truth, against all who attempt to undermine it, or explain away its meaning. Such preaching and teaching it values beyond the refinements of philosophy and the deductions of reason, as better adapted to the wants of sinners, and most refreshing to the souls of saints. This is the first characteristic of the Pentecostal church. "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine."

But in addition, we read that they continued daily in the temple ;—that is, they observed with becoming regularity the means of grace, and availed themselves of every opportunity of hearing the word. We would expect this, and take it for granted, were it not intimated by the inspired penman. It was under the preaching of Peter they had experienced a change of heart, and had been brought to the enjoyment of peace in believing. And now the more they heard about Christ and the glorious truths of christianity, the more they desired to hear. They never became tired of listening to divine things. As often as the church was assembled, all the members were present to take part. It is also to be borne in mind, that meetings for worship in the apostolic church were more frequent than with us. The pious few went up to the temple every day, and the members of the Pentecostal church, following the good example of the old dispensation, went daily into the temple for devotional exercises. Poor though they were as a general rule, and compelled from day to day to labor for their bread, they gladly devoted the necessary hours that the claims of religion demanded, to the service of God.

Looking at the matter calmly, can it be possible for any true believer to act otherwise? Can you imagine a christian satiated with gospel ordinances,—who has attained to such a state of spiritual strength, that he no longer needs the worship of God's house, and the enjoyment of communion with God's people? Such a thing would entirely reverse the order of spiritual life. Should we

not rather expect that as years roll on, he will become more devoted and exemplary in religious duties ; that his longings after the divine presence will be stronger and stronger, and his attendance upon the house of God more constant ? And if in any one instance we find it otherwise, we may safely conclude that the man never had any religion to begin with, or that spiritual and fatal decline has begun its work upon the soul.

The third characteristic of this Pentecostal church was their fellowship, or the interest they took in one another. This is evidently a matter of no small moment, for the Evangelist makes special mention of the fact that they continued steadfastly in the fellowship of the saints. It is well to have correct notions of what this fellowship consists in. If good for the apostolic church, and if it contributed to the spiritual prosperity of the entire body, then surely it is the part of churches at the present day to follow their example. All churches recognize the fellowship of the saints, although in some instances it is exceedingly hard for them to define what they mean by the phrase. According to some, christian fellowship is simply and only the breaking of bread together from time to time in commemoration of Christ's death, and in token of our acceptance of the christian faith. "The communion of the body of Christ" is indeed a binding duty upon all believers, and a most precious means of extending brotherly love in the church of God, but not by any means all that is meant by the fellowship of the saints. If a man's fellowship with God's people is not more frequent than at the sacramental table, it is of little value. Others, again, regard this christian fellowship as nothing more than the act of worshipping together in the same church, and meeting accidentally upon the Sabbath day. Because they sit together, and sing together, and engage in the same outward acts of devotion, they conclude that they are enjoying christian fellowship.

Now we hold very different views of this matter. God's word in speaking of this fellowship gives it a far more extended meaning than churches at the present day seem to imagine, and just because we fall short of our duty in this matter, we pauperize our own souls, bring coldness and indifference into our meetings, and repel anxious inquirers from the house of God. The coldness, the unfriendliness, the haughty bearing of members of the church of Christ, are among the greatest stumbling blocks to a general acceptance of christianity, and do more to neutralize a gospel ministry, however faithfully exerc'scd, than all the infidelity that has been published from the days of Voltaire down to the present age.

What then, is it asked, is the scriptural idea of apostolic fellowship? Let the history of the apostolic church supply an answer. I only ask a careful and candid perusal of that age to convince every one that the fellowship spoken of was of the most liberal and comprehensive kind. Bear in mind the condition of the members of this church. They were for the most part poor, uninfluential, unknown, and destitute. They had just abandoned different forms of faith, and become banded together as believers in Christ and members of his church. They were exposed to persecution, and had doubtless already suffered for their fidelity. They had no friends in the world, outside this little christian community—none to whom they dare entrust their affairs, or in whose confidence they could rely. They had no opportunities apart from the meetings of the church, for counsel and conference in regard to momentous and urgent matters, affecting the interests of their religion. In times of sickness or suffering or bereavement,—in poverty and want,—there were none beyond the membership of the church to whom they could apply for sympathy, for assistance, and all those little acts of love that sweeten the journey of life and alleviate its sorrows; they were absolutely dependent upon the mutual friendship, good will, affection and brotherly attachments of the church. If these were

denied them, their case was indeed pitiable, and heartrending in the extreme.

But the fellowship of the church anticipated and provided for all such emergencies. Next to the reality of their communion with God in Christ, was their friendship for one another. The conversion they had experienced produced a holy fellowship. They recognized their duties to the household of faith ; they were members one of another, and if one member suffered all the members suffered with it. The evidence of their faith was the exercise of love and sympathy towards the brethren, for as John says, "Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." That is, if the children love the parent, they cannot but love one another, and desire each other's welfare. The picture presented us is not so much a church as a family, where a common feeling binds every soul together, where peace and good will, charity and self-denial are the crowning graces ; where the bright sunshine of heaven is never clouded by hatred, or variance, suspicion or distrust ; and where all are aiming at a common object, and contributing of their influence to the general good.

Now, what is the church but a family of saints ? We know no distinctions here. At a common footstool and around the table of the Lord, the rich and the poor meet together, for the Lord is the maker and the Saviour of them all. Class distinctions and social classifications should be unknown in the church of Christ. It is no condescension for the rich man to recognize the poor, nor is it any honor for the poor man to be favored by the recognition of the rich, save in so far as he is rich in faith and an heir to the kingdom. All pride, all vanity, all haughty looks, everything that savors of conscious superiority in one church member towards another, is out of place in the house of God. In society and the secular affairs of life, there must of necessity be superiors and inferiors,—masters and servants,—those who occupy the highest and those who occupy

the lowest rounds of the ladder, but no such accidental differences of rank should ever be recognized in the sanctuary. The peer and the peasant, the king and the subject, the prince and the pauper, should all meet as brethren in the church on earth, if they are to gain an humble place in the church in heaven.

Is there such fellowship in evangelical churches at the present day? We bring no accusations against any man or any church. But truth compels us to say that there are many who never practice the christian fellowship of the apostolic age. We ask nothing impossible of any member. We do not overlook the fact that the urgencies of business and the claims of home often hinder the enjoyment of christian fellowship, where, but for these, there is a willing mind. But making every allowance, are we not all guilty in this matter? Is it not a fact that some people come to the church Sabbath after Sabbath, week after week, and month after month, without a single enquiry being made as to their circumstances, residence or church relations? Is it not true that young men come and go without any of those attentions and friendly regards, which it is the duty of christians in the church to show to such as have not the advantages of home and the oversight of parents? Is it not a fact that members pass each other on the street without recognition, or just with such recognition as intimates the fact that they move in different orbits, and belong to an entirely different order of society? Is it not true that sickness and death and destitution prevail in families, without the knowledge or without the sympathy and assistance that should be given by professed members of the church? Is it not imagined by some good people, that they have fully discharged their duties and relieved their consciences of all burdens, when they come to the church or prayer meeting, and give for the support of ordinances? Is it not the feeling of many church members that the minister is to do all the regular pastoral visitation, all the friendly and social calls, all the

ministrations demanded by sick beds and funerals, and give all the counsel and advice that the endless wants of congregations impose, without the aid and support, or co-operation of a single member? Are there not in all our churches such mistaken views as to the nature and obligations of christian membership?

If it were merely to cultivate a friendly spirit, or to increase congregations numerically, we should not so earnestly allude to this matter, although such a consideration is surely of some weight. But we plead for christian fellowship on higher grounds. There can be no growth in grace, where there is indifference to each other's welfare. There can be no moral influence, where there is no unity of feeling and concentration of aim. There can be no real zeal, little true devotion, and little achievement in the work' of the Lord, where every man looks upon his own things and not those of his neighbor. "Bear ye one another's burdens," is the law of christian life. The strong are to support the weak, the wise to instruct the ignorant, the rich to aid the poor. The vitality of any church is based upon these inequalities in christian life, drawing forth the sympathies and affections of the soul, and thus making the entire existence a ministry of gentleness and goodness. "By one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free ; and have been all made to drink into one spirit. That there should be no schism in the body ; but that the members should have the same care one for another."

I very much fear that the scenes of the day of Pentecost, are in many cases regarded with suspicion by christians at the present day. On account of the low state of religion in many of our churches, the exhibition of such terrible earnestness in the matter of salvation, seems little short of madness or fanaticism. We read with wonder of thousands of men and women crying out simultaneously, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" of additions to the church, such as have never been equalled in modern days, and

of a devotedness and zeal in the cause of God that fairly puts to shame our indolence and apathy. If we admit the facts narrated by the evangelist, then, to save ourselves from the charge of spiritual deadness in the Lord's work, we say, that such a state of things was altogether exceptional, that under no circumstances can they be repeated, that the days of miracles are past, that true conversion is not to be looked for in connection with mighty convulsions of the church, and that the silent, unperceived, but all effectual work of God's spirit in the soul, is more reliable than any outward demonstrations of anxiety for sin.

These statements contain some truth. We admit that the age of miracles is past, and that such an occasion as the day of Pentecost is not the normal condition of the church. It is also true that although we have not such mighty and numerous conversions as characterized the apostolic age, we are not to conclude that the church is forsaken or that piety is extinct. But admitting all this, it is not to be concluded, that in the event of God's spirit being plentifully poured down upon churches and nations, we may not again witness the supernatural and incontrovertible evidences of conversion. They may, we hold, be repeated at any time; the tongues of fire and the gifts of language may be absent, but loud cries of broken hearts and awakened consciences, are the natural effects of a faithful and heaven-blessed ministry.

We need such an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Ministers and missionaries need it to qualify them for their work. Learning, eloquence and orthodoxy are good and necessary, but of themselves impotent for saving souls. Theological training and severe mental discipline are not enough—the Holy Spirit must fire the heart and purify the affections, and teach the arm how to wield the weapon of God's word. The church needs it. Our services are cold and formal—our prayer meetings lifeless—the standard of piety is low—faith is feeble—love is lukewarm, and christian effort for the

salvation of souls, all but extinct. The faithful Israels in our congregations are desponding, and almost beginning to doubt the fulfilment of the promise. Our evangelical churches are divided. Sectarianism, denominationalism, and petty strifes are keeping pious hearts asunder, while Satan builds up his kingdom upon the ruins of the church, and error lifts up her head defiantly toward heaven. The world needs it—the power of divine truth requires renewed attestation from time to time—the pulpit must be lifted to its true position, and ungodly men taught that there is a power above and beyond all human combinations. Souls at the present day in thousands are leaping blind-folded into hell, amid the shout of fiends and wail of angels. Surely we need in our land another day of Pentecost!

How are we to obtain such an outpouring of the Spirit? God works by means in the world of grace, as well as in the domain of nature. Just in the same way as the disciples obtained the Pentecostal baptism of fire. They expected it; they waited for it; they continued, day after day, of one accord, in one place, and the result was that the spirit came. Only thus are real revivals commenced and carried on. No man, whatever be his talents and endowments, can savingly impress or convert a soul. Revivals, so called, begun and continued under the mere pressure of emotional excitement, produce no real reformations, and in the end react to the disgrace of the church at large. It is only by waiting upon God, by expecting the promised blessing, by lifting up the hands and voice and heart to heaven, by wrestling, struggling, and holding on to the promise, in spite of all discouragements and secret fears, that we can obtain it. If we would but sincerely expect an answer to our prayers, and think it strange if we did not receive it, and if, to our prayers we added constant effort, working, and praying and praying and working, we should soon receive such a blessing as would far exceed our most sanguine expectations.

Thanksgiving Memories.

“Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem: praise thy God, O Zion: for he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates: he hath blessed thy children within thee. He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat. He showeth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel.”

—Psalm 147, v. 12, 13, 14, 19.

“And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or no.”

—Deuteronomy 8, v. 12.

THANKSGIVING MEMORIES.

THANKSGIVING held a prominent place in the Jewish religion. An undevout and unthankful Jew was an anomaly. Every year, at the beginning and close of harvest, the temple was thronged with worshippers to celebrate God's goodness ; while at other seasons offerings were made in token of gratitude for individual and national mercies. With glad and joyful hearts, "they remembered all the way which the Lord their God had led their fathers, forty years in the wilderness," and the fulfilment of his promises, that they should possess a land of hills and valleys, where the early and latter rain should fall in due season ; a land abounding in corn, in wine and in oil, with grass in the fields for cattle, and plenty for all to eat and be full. And just so long as the Jews remained faithful to Jehovah, were these temporal mercies continued. The covenant made with their fathers was kept to the very letter. "The Lord thy God will love thee, and bless thee and multiply thee ; he will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine and the flocks of thy sheep—thou shalt be blessed above all people."

Every christian land, more or less, has followed the pious Jew in this comely service. Throughout Great Britain, alike in grand cathedral and humble ivy-covered chapel, there are sung the same exultant hymns of praise, while on this continent of America, from the time when the Pilgrim fathers landed at Plymouth rock in the little "Mayflower," on to the present, the day has been hailed as one for universal joy. These Puritans were not the austere men that some regard them. They had for every day a sort of joy, but one stately day of joy they set aside in every year. Thanksgiving morning rose in New England, stiff as their pines, and solemn as their granite hills. The boys who laughed, were as guilty as if they laughed on Sunday. The church bells rang out, not cheerily perhaps, but solemnly, tolling the people to the house of worship. They went up gravely, and awfully, and worshipped. But the sermon over, the old Puritan relaxed, and unclasped his buckle and threw off his belt. Merry laughter rang out from the children of the household, and the old homestead was vocal with joy. The tables smoked and groaned with unaccustomed luxuries, and with gladness and gratitude the day was closed.

We must look back as well as forward. The future is moulded and directed by the past. Sailing on a river steamboat, you have noticed how the man at the wheel steers the vessel by certain headlands that indicate his course. He looks behind from time to time as well as forward; the bends and curves and windings of the channel through which he has passed indicate his position and mark his course. In like manner the lessons of our past lives are to be studied with reference to the future. As nations and individuals we are to remember all the way which the Lord has led us in the wilderness, to prove us and know what was in our hearts, and whether we would keep His commandments or not.

Moses is now near his journey's end. He is not permitted to enter Canaan. That honor was reserved for Joshua, his successor

in command. But before parting from the Israelites he rehearses in their hearing what the Lord had done for them, and what was expected of them. During their pilgrimage in the wilderness the goodness of God had been conspicuously manifest. Bodily comforts and spiritual provision had never failed them. The dealings of Providence in the way of chastisements, had all been directed towards their future welfare. Their condition in Egypt, leading a rude, barbarian, and slavish life, was not such as to qualify them for possessing and governing Canaan. The policy of Pharaoh, like that of tyrants in every age, was to keep them ignorant of higher and nobler things, for when knowledge enters men's souls, they begin to demand their rights and assert their independence. Hence their need of discipline, that when they entered the promised land, they might do so creditably—with intelligence and courage sufficient to inspire them with the success of their enterprise, and their enemies with fear. Their forty years' probation life was thus mingled judgment and mercy. Their chastisements were all directed by infinite wisdom and love. If they were humbled and suffered to hunger, and fed with manna, it was that they might know that man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord. During all these forty years their raiment had not waxed old, neither had their feet swelled, and now says Moses : "The Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks and water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills ; a land of wheat and barley, and vines, and fig-trees and pomegranates ; a land of olive oil and honey ; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness ; a land whose stones are iron, and whose hills are brass."

There was danger, not only that the Israelites would forget God and his dealings with them in the wilderness, but that their hearts would be unduly lifted up, in view of the noble patrimony that had so mysteriously come into their hands, and that so far

exceeded their most sanguine anticipations. Take any race of slaves—more or less educated, as the case may be—and make them masters of the situation ; put into their hands the reins of government, and bestow upon them the highest honors of the commonwealth, and is there not danger that they will rule with a rod of iron, and exhibit that pride and haughtiness of soul which is the mark of foolish ignorance and degraded origin ? Therefore says Moses : “ Beware, lest when thou hast eaten and are full, and hast built goodly houses and dwelt therein ; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, that thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt and from the house of bondage ; and thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.” Such conduct would inevitably provoke God’s anger and hasten their destruction. Like the idolatrous nations which the Lord had driven out from before them, so would they perish and be blotted out from the memory of men. In order then, that they might secure a continuance of national and individual blessings, constant and grateful acknowledgment of past mercies was necessary. “ When thou hast eaten and art full then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.”

The very number, magnitude and regular occurrence of our mercies produce forgetfulness. It is only when they are withheld that we begin to value them. One eclipse of the sun makes a greater impression than the shining of a year. The sickness of a few days makes us more sensible of the value of health, than years of uninterrupted strength and soundness of frame. The failure of one harvest makes us realize the presence of God in nature more than the overflowing granaries of a score of years. The goodness of God in providing a gourd to screen the prophet Jonah from the scorching heat of the sun, was only appreciated when the gourd



Thanksgiving—The Feast of Trumpets.

withered and died. So long as the manna falls and hunger is met, we care not to think of the source. So long as the cistern is full, and thirst is quenched, we live in forgetfulness of Him who gathers the clouds and pours down upon the earth the refreshing rain !

Such unmindfulness of God's mercies is criminal. It evinces the basest ingratitude. Nor is it a sin restricted to theoretical atheists and materialists, who ignore the providence of God in the world, and live in utter disregard of heaven's bounties. Professing christians are often chargeable with forgetfulness of God's goodness. Beyond a formal thanksgiving service, there is no summing up of the abundant causes for gratitude, nor becoming sacrifice of praise.

To-day we are called as individuals and as christian citizens of this nation, to remember the way by which we have been led during the closing year. We are to place our mercies in review ; make them stand out one by one in bold relief, so that each mercy may inspire a hymn of praise. This review of God's goodness should be a daily exercise. You cannot fill up faithfully the details of each day's transactions in your diary or ledger, if left for weeks or months untouched, nor can you once a year honestly record God's goodness. As Keble, the Christian poet, says :

New every morning is the love
Our wakening and uprising prove ;
Through sleep and darkness safely brought,
Restored to life and power and thought.

New mercies, each returning day,
Hover around us while we pray ;
New perils past, new sins forgiven,
New thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven.

We never forget our trials ; nay, a large number of christians make complaining and murmuring a religious duty—a matter of conscience. Every case of sickness ; every unsuccessful speculation ; every disappointment is carefully noted down. Had it not

been for this or that, how much richer, happier, or more prosperous would they have been! No attempt is made to relieve the dark picture, by throwing in the warm glowing tints of God's loving kindness and unmerited favors so unremittingly bestowed. What of all the bygone years of health? of profitable investments? of the savings laid past for old age? of the victories achieved in the battle of life? Put the one against the other, and in magnitude and number, our trials are but a drop of water compared with the boundless unfathomable ocean of God's love.

In order to prompt you to thanksgiving, think for a moment of the more common benefits bestowed upon you during the year. Continued existence and physical strength, while others have been laid upon beds of sickness, and many have been called away. Signal deliverances from danger, which have overtaken thousands by sea and land. Special favors and singular good fortune, which have added immensely to the happiness of life, while in the case of others the common mercies of Providence have been withheld, and heart-broken, they have sunk under crushing woes. Extend your view. Take into account your social comforts; the unbroken family circle; the daily joyous meetings at the table and family altar; the good night and good morning, and all the greetings of household love that have brightened and sweetened your dwelling, while in other families there have been breaches, separations, desolation and misfortune in rapid succession—the graveyard visited again and again, and parent and child laid side by side! Surely the mere mention of such things must compel the most indifferent and reckless to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies."

As christians, we have still stronger reasons to remember with gratitude the way we have been led during the closing year. Con-

tinued powers of mind to mark and enjoy God's goodness as manifested in Providence and grace ; the enjoyment of gospel ordinances ; strength given to bear chastisement ; meekness and resignation given us in parting with all we deemed precious on earth, and hopes of glory brightened, when standing by the grave's mouth ;—the aid of the Holy Spirit in advancing us in the divine life ; purifying our desires ; enlarging our vision, and giving us a clearer and firmer grasp of the promised and purchased blessings of the better world !

Let us now briefly look at some causes for national thanksgiving. In brief these may be stated as peace, plenty and gospel privileges. Peace—"He hath strengthened the bars of thy gates, he maketh peace in thy borders." Plenty—"He filleth thee with the finest of wheat." Gospel privileges—"He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel."

First then, we have cause for thanksgiving that we are at peace within ourselves, and with all the world.

It has not been so everywhere during the year. Nations have not yet agreed to settle their quarrels by arbitration. The prophecy seems yet far distant from fulfilment—"They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks ; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." The recent Afghan and Zulu and Egyptian wars, which have left behind them woe and desolation in many homes, both civilized and savage, are only the last of a long series of bloody conflicts in which christian nations have been engaged. We pass no judgment upon the ostensible causes or the probable results of such fearful concussions. But all right thinking men must regret that the policy of "peace with honor," to use the words of a British statesman, has not prevailed without recourse to brutal wars. To me, one of the saddest features of our age, is the willingness—nay the alacrity, with which christian nations enter upon hostilities.

National honor is indeed a noble sentiment, but it may be maintained at too great a cost of blood and treasure. As with individual christians, so ought it to be with christian commonwealths. That charity which is not easily provoked—which beareth all things—hopeth all things, and endureth all things—is a far nobler possession than magnificent victories on the battle-field—the forced submission of savage tribes, or the acquisition of territory and supremacy in the far-off regions of the globe.

Peace hath her victories
No less renowned than War.

A few years since, we looked upon a wonderfully vivid panorama of the siege of Paris, when the German army for long months surrounded the white-walled city with a belt of fire. So life-like was the picture, and on so vast a scale, we could almost imagine ourselves spectators or actors in the struggle, and see the shells exploding behind the breastworks. What Paris must have been during that awful period of suspense, no human being can describe. The streets silent as death, save the hurried tramp of armed men; famishing women and children crying for bread to eat, while within and without the walls lay the unburied dead, bleaching and mortifying in the sight of heaven. And when added to this picture of horrors, we saw the piece of bone from the shattered skull of the Archbishop of Paris, who was shot by the infuriated mob, we felt as we never felt before, how terrible is the scourge, and how great the responsibility of those who light the torch and blow the blast of war! Napoleon, like his great predecessor, imagined he could defy the world. His immense army must have amusement, and the prestige of France be maintained. If there are no real enemies to fight with, they must be made. "Louis has had his first baptism of fire," so ran the Emperor's telegram to Eugenie, at the opening of the war.

They baptized you in Jordan water,
Baptized as a Christian I mean ;
But you come of the race of Cæsar,
And thus have their baptisms been.

Baptized in true Cæsar fashion,
Remember through all your years,
That your font was a burning city,
And your water its widows' tears.

But alas ! "let not him that girdeth on his harness, boast himself as he that putteth it off." A dead exiled Emperor, and a dead Prince, lying side by side at Chiselhurst, make but a sad tribute to the praise of war. Well has the poet Cowper said :

Great princes have great playthings.
Some seek diversion in the tented field,
And make the sorrows of mankind their sport.
But war's a game which, were their subjects wise,
Kings would not play at. Nations would ^{do} well
To extort their truncheons from the puny ^{la} ds
Of heroes, whose infirm and baby minds
Are gratified with mischief, and who spoil
Because men suffer it, their toy, the world.

It might have been so with us. Our security lies not in a standing army. We cannot—we would not—boast, like an American preacher, "that our soldiers and sailors are better than any other nation, and that we can oppose millions to any hundreds of thousands that can be landed on our shores." Our defence is not in man. Our safety is from the Lord. It is He that maketh peace within our borders—who gives us rest from all our enemies, so that the morning brings on its breeze no sound of cannon, or clashing bayonets, or groans of the wounded, or cries of widows and orphans, or streets and fields slippery with blood, and filled with the dying and the dead ; and the evening no invasions of foreign soldiery, or the violence and plunder of the assassin. The delights

of the sanctuary are unbroken by anarchy and revolution. We sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, with none to make us afraid.

Secondly,—We have cause for thanksgiving, in view of the abundant harvests of the year. In the words of the Psalmist, we may well say: “Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it; Thou greatly enrichest it with the rivers of God, which is full of water; Thou preparest them corn when Thou hast so provided for it; Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly; Thou settlest the furrows thereof; Thou makest it soft with showers; Thou blessest the springing thereof; Thou crownest the year with thy goodness, and thy paths drop fatness; They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness, and the little hills rejoice on every side; the pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.” “They that sowed in tears have reaped in joy; they that went forth weeping, bearing precious seed, have returned rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them.” Our storehouses are filled to repletion with the plenteous produce of the field, and the treasury of the nation replenished by the gold and silver of other nations, who depend on us for food to sustain their teeming millions. On this day of thanksgiving we gladly acknowledge that all things are His that we enjoy. Health of body and vigor of mind—food and raiment—house and friends—the genial sunshine—the gentle rains—the distilling dews—the grateful winds—the blushing fruit—the waving harvests—the bursting granaries—the bleating flocks, and the lowing herds—the ocean’s commerce and the country’s gain. Men may, in accordance with the teachings of a false philosophy, ascribe plenteous harvests and the revival of trade to other causes, but christian men will humbly acknowledge the bounty of the great benefactor, who maketh the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. The seasons as they change are but the varied God.

The rolling year
 Is full of Thee.
 God is ever present, ever felt
 In the void waste as in the city full ;
 And where He vital spreads there must be joy.
 I cannot go
 Where universal love, not smiles around,
 Sustaining all your orbs ; and all their suns."

Brethren, when we contrast our condition to-day as a nation, with what might have been had God withheld from us his favor, and blighted and blasted our crops, or by deluges of rain, rotted them in the fields and prevented their ingathering—surely there is cause for most devout gratitude. Poverty there is in the land. Destitution still exists and will exist in spite of abundant harvests. But what would have been our condition if commercial stagnation had been followed by famine, pestilence and death ?

Thirdly, we have cause for thanksgiving, in view of the continuance of gospel privileges.

This is the best of all our blessings, although not tangible. Without an open Bible, and the ordinances of religion, a nation is poor indeed. Kingdoms are great, not in proportion as wealth and power and material, or brute forces predominate, but as they excel in the higher moral and intellectual qualities, which are inseparable from a pure christianity. When mercy and truth meet together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other ; when truth springs out of the earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven, then glory dwells in the land and the land yields her increase.

The return of the weekly Sabbath, in itself is an event precious beyond computation. This one day, consecrated to communion between man and his Maker, when the looms and spindles and machinery of our great factories are silent, and the store and counting house are forgotten, and the maddening noise of brokers and

stock exchange is suspended, supplies the life blood of a nation. Blot out this red letter day of the week, and you open the flood-gates of vice, and sap the foundations of morality.

In the matter of Sabbath observance and attendance upon God's house, we are deserving of censure. The day is fast becoming a holiday—not a holy day. The sacredness which in olden times was associated with the Sabbath, is a thing of the past, and christian fathers and mothers are educating their children to become open Sabbath breakers, by their own indifference to the claims of religion. I know well the usual stereotype excuses that are made by sceptics and secularists for such ungodliness. "The universe is God's temple. I can worship God anywhere. Religion does not consist of outward and audible service, but in the breathings of the heart." Not thus did the Psalmist David speak or act. As king, statesman, warrior and poet, burdened with the cares of empire, he gladly went up to the sanctuary, that the divine life within his soul might be sustained by contact with the altar fire!

Now a days, Puritanic and Covenanting Sabbaths are spoken of with derision by men unworthy to unloose the shoelatches of their ancestors. Would that we had such Sabbaths back again, with all their austerity and severity; when in every home, and through every street, might be heard morning and evening the voice of praise and prayer, and "when a Sabbath stillness marked the commencement and the close of each day, and a deep religious repose rested on the land!"

Do men who make light of the Bible and its hallowed associations, and seek to banish it from our homes and schools, understand what this means? It means the destruction of liberty—law and government—of faith between man and man—of the eternal basis of right and wrong. It means the utter annihilation of our hopes for time and eternity, the enthronement of ignorance and superstition and barbarism in the world, and the return of dark

days when brute force reigned supreme, and the criminal passions were satiated by cruelty and rapine. No nation has prospered whose inhabitants have despised the word of God, profaned the Sabbath, and neglected the sanctuary. Such nations are mutable and evanescent—forever surging on the brink of revolution—fostering corruption among the rulers, and debauchery among the ruled.

On such a day of thanksgiving, it becomes us humbly to acknowledge our wrong-doing as a nation. Crime increases in every form. Gigantic frauds in banking and mercantile institutions—flagrant dishonesties by master and servant—perjury, drunkenness, gambling; unbridled and open licentiousness, practised under the very eyes and winked at by our officials; dens of iniquity sending to perdition many of our youth, and party spirit that knows no limit to vituperation and slander. Were it not for strong faith in the indestructible power of truth, and the resistless force of the manifold christian agencies that are at work, we should almost despair of our land. Nor is the outlook over the world more hopeful. Yet let us not despond. The day is near at hand, when holiness shall be written upon the very bells of the horses, and when crested warriors shall no longer dip their plumes in blood.

True loyalty is not to be measured by loud and vapid outbursts of patriotic sentiment, and therefore before closing, let me point out one or two dangers to which we are exposed, deserving the serious consideration of every man who wishes well to his country and the world.

No one can shut his eyes to the fact that there has been, in recent years, a very marked decline in public integrity. We have no longer to go to the United States for examples of corruption and bribery and malfeasance in office. The scandals in political life that are constantly being unmasked—the wholesale bribery engaged in at elections, where men are bought and sold at the

polling-booths, like so many cattle in the market, make every honest man blush for shame and hang his head in sorrow. Here, as in the United States, cunning and trickery, with wealth at command to buy constituencies, are esteemed most fitting attributes for official position. So thoroughly has this evil permeated our country and withstood all efforts of a reforming character, that in the estimate of many good men, our political condition is hopeless! They abstain from all active interference in the affairs of the commonwealth, and are loud in their lamentations over the social and political degeneracy of the age, but do nothing to raise the standard of public integrity in the high places of the land.

I am not of the opinion that things have become so hopelessly bad. But if a change is to be brought about, it is to be done by christian men, and not by the decisions of Judges nor acts of Parliament. The sooner we get rid of the notion that christian men are ineligible to high position, and that church members and ministers are to stand aloof from all parliamentary and municipal contests, the better ; unless, indeed, we are prepared for a condition of affairs that shall rival the neighboring republic, where civil honors and emoluments belong to the most ignorant and debased in the community—to men whose very names are a synonym for all that is dishonest and demoralizing.

The terrible extravagance in style of living which is prevalent at the present day, is also matter for serious concern to every good man. If Canadian pioneers were to rise from their graves, and look at the dress and conduct of their children and their grandchildren, they would be astounded beyond measure. In their days, wealth was acquired slowly but surely—a competency for old age gained by honest industry was the height of a man's ambition. Men paid their debts, or the pillory stared them in the face, without the alternative of an insolvent court. But in our day the maxims of our ancestors are laughed at as childish. The log cabin has not

only given place to the substantial brick or stone dwelling, but the fittings and furnishings (bought but unpaid in many cases) rival the palaces of royalty. There is nothing wrong in any man amassing wealth and surrounding himself with the comforts of existence, provided the money has been gained by honest industry. But in many cases the reverse is the case. Systematic fraud and swindling is now reduced to a science, and the man who makes an assignment and transfers his belongings to another, out of reach of his creditors, is called a wise and prudent man! The more laborious handicrafts are now despised. Servant girls scorn the drudgery, as they style it, of a christian home, and prefer the sewing machine and the factory and the freedom of town and city life, to the wholesome restraints of a well regulated family. Farmers' sons hurry from the farmstead to be clerks, and salesmen and physicians and lawyers, and their daughters go out into the world clothed in all the tinsel and finery that money can procure, but lamentably unfit to adorn a home, or become the wives of sensible men. And this is called civilization and refinement and enterprise! And we laugh at the vulgarity and simplicity and homeliness of our sires, whose practical knowledge and sound attainments in every department of literature and science, puts to shame the mere smatterings of our modern aristocracy, who bulk so largely in the public view.

Once more, the absence of religious training among the young is a matter of serious thought to christian men and women of our land. The history of nations shows that Bible principles instilled into the heart of youth, is the only hope for permanent and solid growth. There is no true civilization apart from christian ethics. But this cannot be done by Sabbath Schools, however efficiently equipped, nor can it be done by common schools. If done at all it must be done by christian parents. But even supposing that all the christian parents in the land faithfully discharged their duty in this respect, what of the tens of thousands of children, who are left

uncared for, born in ignorance of God—growing up to manhood and womanhood degraded and debauched—ulcers and plague spots in the community? The time has come, it seems to me, when the Bible must be used as a text book in our common schools, and when we must have confidence in the religious character of every man and woman entrusted with the training of our youth. It needs not that debated points in theology and church government be taken up, but that the high standard of christian living, which the Bible recognizes as the safeguard of men and nations, be impressed upon the plastic minds of our youth. Mere secular knowledge never has, and never can, make law-abiding subjects or real patriots.

As christian men, let us anew gird ourselves to the great work of removing these evils, and evangelizing this entire nation, in its length and in its breadth. There is much land yet to be possessed. Narrowing our view to the continent of America, comprising Canada and the United States, the great Northwest, British Columbia, Australia, and other colonies, what fields for missionary enterprise stretch out before the eye! Why has our place been appointed for us in this goodly land? Not simply to increase our riches and add to our individual happiness, but that from us the true religion may flow forth to more remote and destitute portions of the earth. The church must keep pace with commerce and civilization. Distant regions opened up by the discoveries of travellers must be possessed for Christ, and the true religion planted on every citadel of Satan. Faith in the purpose and promise of God, courage to conquer, and a generous consecration of our means to God's cause, will ensure us victory.

In grateful praise lies our hope of continued bestowment of God's favor. Thanksgiving is the beginning of heaven. But thanksgiving is a mockery without corresponding sacrifice. Thanksgiving is good, but a continued thankful life is better. Out of our

abundance we are to give freely for the good of our fellow men. The liberal soul shall be made fat. There is that scattereth and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet and it tendeth to poverty. "To deal thy bread to the hungry, and to clothe the naked, and bring the poor that are cast out into thy house," are the best evidences of a thankful soul. "How much owest thou unto my Lord?" Such a question rightly pondered will make you respond, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me?"

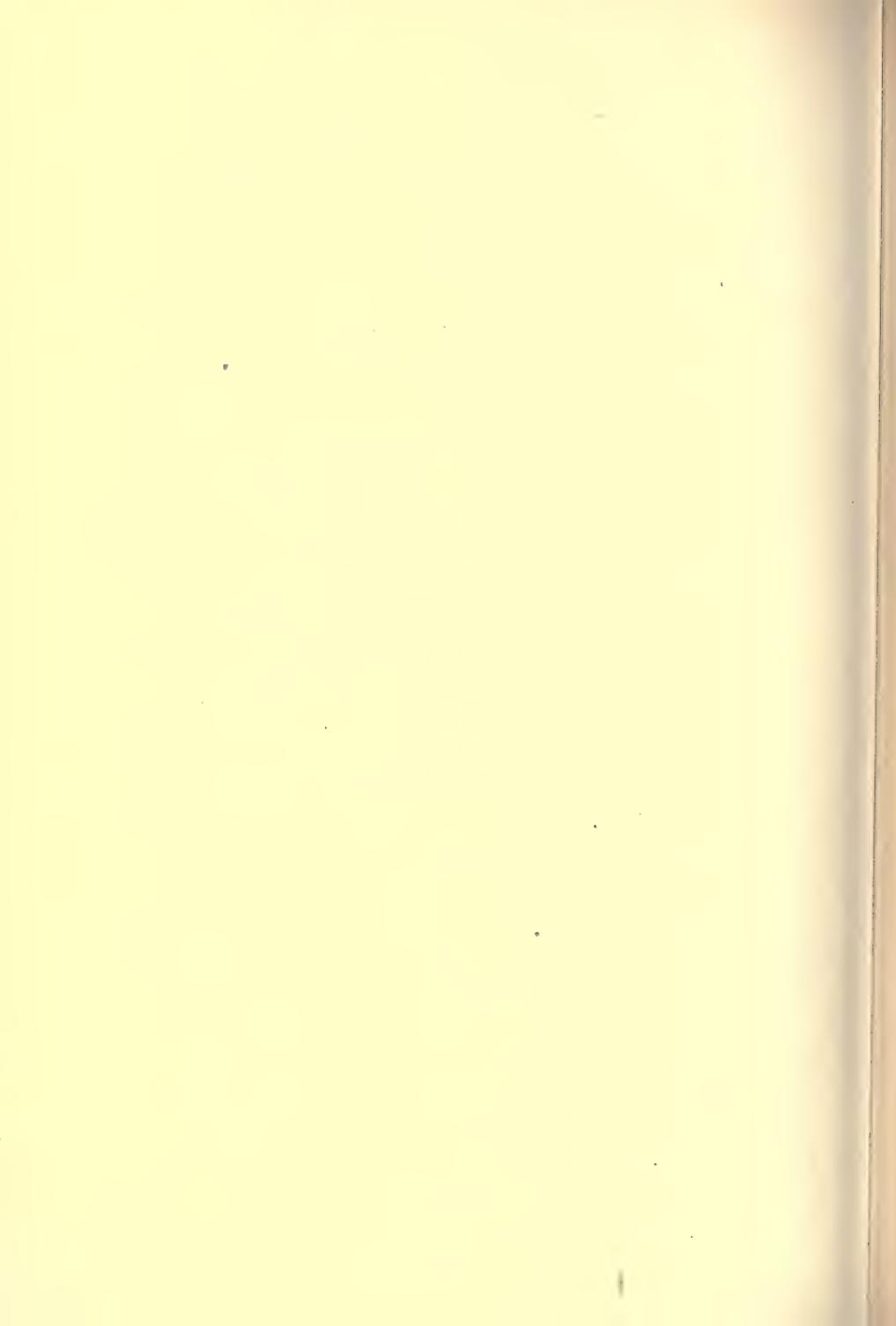
God of the swiftly rolling year !
Thy bounties lie on every hand ;
How rich thy varied gifts appear,
While 'neath the arching skies we stand :
With countless sheaves of golden grain
The joyful reapers strew the plain.

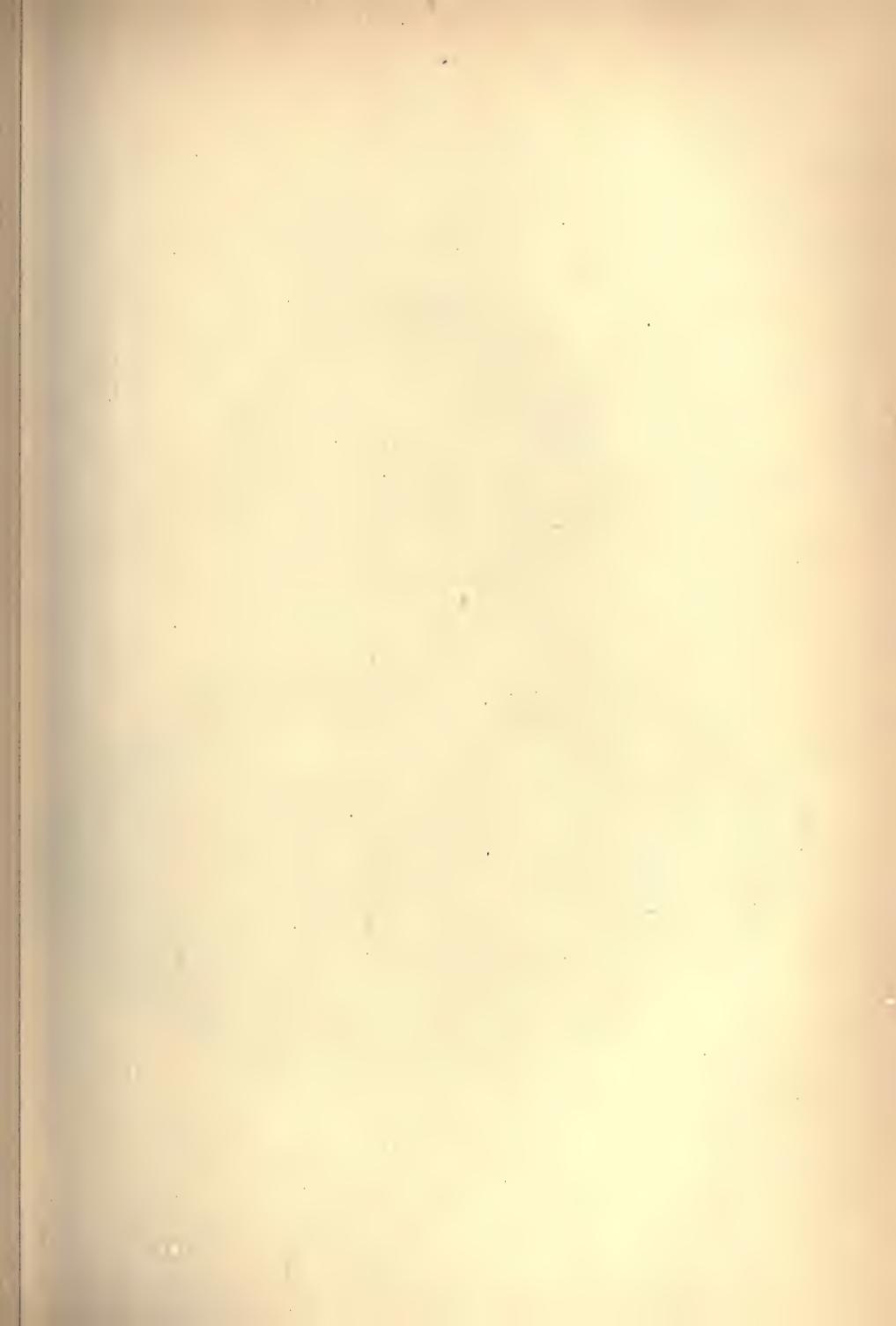
Pensile from every drooping bough,
Fair in the sunlight's ruddy glow,
The ripening fruits are bending now—
From lavish hands our blessings flow.

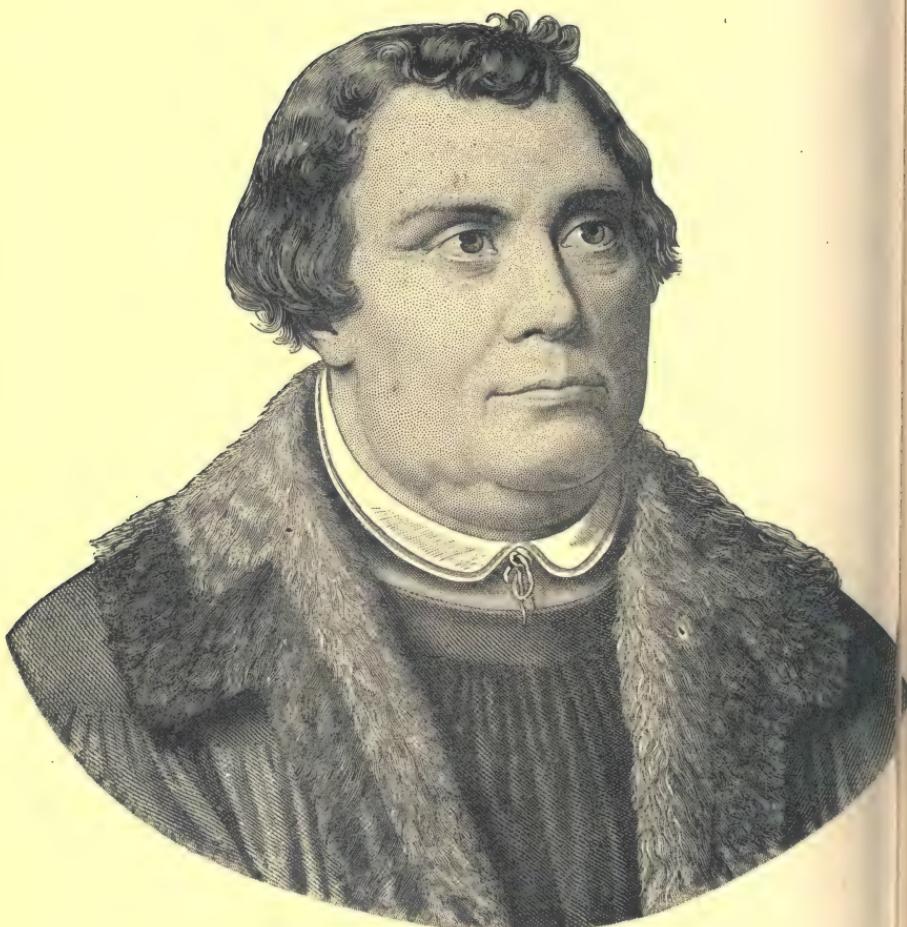
With thankful hearts our lips repeat
God's goodness to this latest hour ;
O lift to Him each voice in praise
Whose bounteous love hath crowned our days.



BIOGRAPHICAL.







MARTIN LUTHER.

Martin Luther.

On occasion of the Special Services, commemorative of
the Four Hundreth Anniversary of the great German
Reformer.

“A mighty, valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and the Lord is with him.”

1st Samuel, 16, v. 18.

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”

—Galatians 5, v. 1.

MARTIN LUTHER.

REAT and good men are God's gifts. As such, without idolatrous homage, their deeds in behalf of humanity ought to be kept in everlasting remembrance, and the lessons of their lives pondered by those who enjoy the heritage they have left behind them. There never has been a period in the history of church or state that God has not special agents prepared for special emergencies—men endowed with more than the average measure of courage, fidelity and daring, to speak in His name and defend His truth. Having found it themselves after great and sore travail, they cannot but make it known to others, that the suffering brotherhood of souls may enjoy the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Such a man was Martin Luther.

He was born at Eisleben in Upper Saxony, on the 10th of November, 1483, and because he was baptized on St. Martin's day, he was named after that saint. His great grandfather and grandfather were Saxon peasants. His father, John Luther, was originally a miner, but latterly a proprietor of mines, and chief magistrate of the city of Mansfield. His mother's name was Margaret Linderman. Both parents are described as somewhat rough and hot

tempered, but pious, true and honest at heart, and trained their son in the fear of God. At the age of fourteen years, he was sent to the grammar school of Madgeburg, where he remained a year. From this he went to his father's birthplace, Eisenach, in Thuringia, where he continued his studies, and made such marked progress as indicated future greatness.

In 1501 he entered the University of Erfurt, and at the age of twenty, in 1503, was admitted Master of Arts. His determination now was to practice law, but events happened that entirely changed his plans and future destiny.

The change in his choice of profession is variously accounted for. The generally received opinion is, that while walking with a companion, they were overtaken by a thunder storm, both stricken down, and his companion killed by his side. Others say that he fell dangerously ill, and feared he would die; others that a dear friend of his was assassinated, and he felt as if the grave yawned at his feet. Melancthon says that it was brought about by alarming convictions of sin, and apprehensions of divine vengeance, following the sudden death of a companion. It is sufficient for us to know that he was by some startling Providence or the operations of grace, awakened to realize the value of eternity over all the vain ambitions of youth.

The state of religion at that time was low. Our Lord's passion was regarded as a mere human tragedy; the righteousness which is by faith was ignored; the intercession of priests and saints and the Virgin Mary, were deemed essential to pacify divine wrath. Such as could not make atonement for sin by offerings which went to the enrichment of the clergy, were doomed, if not to hell, at least to purgatory, until satisfaction was made. Unmeaning and grossly superstitious ceremonies, and unedifying discourses on rites and processions, formed the staple of worship, while the wickedness and

scandalous lives of priest and people, were covered over and absolved by indulgences.

Luther, like other awakened converts of that age, sought refuge in the monastic retreat of Erfurt, and was admitted. His parents objected. "Take care," said his father, "that you are not ensnared by a delusion of the devil." Luther insisted that he had a call from God, and persevered in his withdrawal from the world, which took place on the 17th of July, 1505.

He did not, however, find peace within the convent. His conscience was greatly troubled. Fasts and penance did not meet his spiritual wants, or remove the burden that weighed upon his heart. He passed through great mental struggles, sometimes shutting himself up in his cell for days, and once was found lying senseless upon the floor. At length when his mind was filled with distressing anxieties about his state, he stumbled upon a copy of the Bible in Latin, which he had never seen before. He read it with avidity, but still was far from knowing the way of pardon. Seeking the advice of an aged God-fearing monk, he was pointed to personal faith in the son of God, as the only method for the remission of sins, and after much further study and prayer and great mental conflict, was led to perfect rest by a saving application of the words: "The just shall live by faith," (Romans 1, v. 17). He now became entirely changed. The righteousness of God, which had been before this a stumbling block, became sweet to his soul, and the entrance on a blessed assurance of a full salvation.

Leaving the walls of the convent, he was ordained in 1507. His ministrations at once attracted the attention of many notables, among whom was Frederick the Elector of Saxony. Next year he was appointed to a professorship in the University of Wittemberg. Here, besides teaching philosophy, he preached with such power, and presented the gospel in such a new light, that crowds were attracted to hear him.

In 1510 he was sent as a Commissioner to Rome under a deep sense of the sacredness of that place, and sincere veneration for the reigning Pope. On his way thither he halted at certain convents, and was shocked at the gross sensuality and informalism that prevailed. Reaching Rome, he visited every sacred spot, but found his feelings in sad contrast with the levity and worldliness that he everywhere encountered. The mass was repeated with the utmost flippancy ; the priests at the altar indulged in the most blasphemous jests, and many of them openly avowed their disbelief of the doctrines they were ordained to preach. With strangely disturbed and conflicting feelings he returned to Germany, and in 1512 was made Doctor of Divinity. He now gave himself up to the study of the scriptures in the original languages, and began expositions on the Psalms and the epistle to the Romans. In all he wrote or spoke, he pointed to the Lamb of God, who alone taketh away the sin of the world, and hastened to tell others how and where he had found peace to his soul.

At this juncture an event occurred that hastened the entrance of the great reformer on the work of his life. Leo X succeeded to the Papal throne in 1513. Saint Peter's had been begun, but remained unfinished for lack of means. To raise the required amount of money, a general indulgence was proclaimed throughout Europe to all who should give towards the building of Saint Peter's. To overcome the objections of foreign princes, who objected to their subjects giving money to Rome, Leo promised Henry VIII a third of the Papal spoils. Tetzel was one of the salesmen of the indulgences, and most unblushingly did he go about his business. He assured his purchasers, that this indulgence would cover both guilt and penance, and was all-efficacious to deliver souls out of purgatory. In his own irreverent style he said. "that as soon as the money tinkled in the box, the souls of their relations received a full discharge, and bolted upward direct to heaven!"

Such doctrine was very different from the belief and teaching of Luther, who, although still a devout Catholic, was shocked at Tetzel's profanity. It made his blood boil. He looked upon the whole thing as a cheat, and refused to absolve from their sins such as had bought Tetzel's indulgences. He was then attacked for resisting the Pope's authority, and in reply drew up his famous ninety-five propositions setting forth his views. He sent a copy to the Archbishop, and on the day before the festival of "All Saints," when crowds of the country people were flocking into the town, he nailed them upon the gates of the castle of Wittemberg, with his name as defender, and read them on All Saints' Day to the people in the great parish church. In these propositions Luther admits the power of the church to remit by indulgence what she has herself imposed, but nothing more. She could not deliver souls from purgatory, nor free them from mortal sins. These propositions were the cry of an oppressed conscience—of revolt and anguish, at the baseness of men, who could thus prostitute God's truth for sordid mammon.

The great controversy between Luther and Rome now waxed hotter and stronger, until at last he was enabled like the Apostles of old, to place the authority of scripture above the church, with her Popes and cardinals and monks, and publicly to condemn the Papal See. But this radical change of opinion was not reached at once. In a discussion to which he was challenged by a noted Romanist, Luther, while opposing the extravagant notions entertained of the Pope's authority, did not altogether deny it. Pressed by his opponent with the passage in Matthew 16, v. 18, 19, which Rome interprets as applying to every Pope as well as Peter, but which Luther regarded as only personal to the Apostle, he was led to further study of the pretensions of his church, and finally declared the whole system of the Papal hierarchy to be a satanic invention, and the Pope the real anti-Christ!

Luther was backed by the Elector of Saxony, and at this period also, Melancthon—a man of gentle and affectionate nature, just the opposite to Luther, and yet the very man he needed, to help him in his arguments against Rome,—came as his colleague in the University of Wittemberg. Students flocked to their classes, and the Reformers of Wittemberg thus spread their views far and wide over all the land.

The Pope now made up his mind to issue a Papal Bull against the reformer. Luther instead of being alarmed was defiant, and published two pamphlets on the matters in dispute, full of bitter sarcasm and stinging rebukes of the priests and the Papacy. Then the Papal Bull arrived and the Elector of Saxony was ordered by the Pope to deliver up the heretic Martin Luther. The question now was, what would Luther do with the Pope's Bull, and what would the elector do with Luther? The elector remained the friend of Luther, and Luther on the 4th of December 1520, burned the Pope's Bull, and along with it all the Roman law books he could find, thus setting free, as far as he was concerned, the German nation from the jurisdiction of Rome. "Germany must abandon Rome. Liberty for ever. The die is cast." Such was the war cry of the popular German rhymes.

The next event in the history of the Reformation is the Diet of Worms, opened by Charles V. on the 20th of January, 1521. At this council the accusations of Luther against the court of Rome were to be considered. Luther having been summoned before the Diet, and an imperial herald sent to bring him, left Wittemberg on the 2nd of April. His friends thought he was going to his death, but Luther replied: "Christ lives, and we will enter Worms in spite of hell and the powers of the air." Afterwards speaking of his fearlessness to the Emperor of Saxony, he said: "The devil saw in my heart that even had I known there would be as many devils at Worms as tiles upon the house roofs still I would

joyfully have plunged among them." When Luther appeared before the Diet he was asked to acknowledge as his the books he had written against the Papacy, and next to retract the heretical doctrines therein contained. Luther acknowledged their authorship, but refused to retract one title. "If I had a thousand heads," he said, "I would allow them all to be cut off, rather than recant a single word. If your imperial majesty requires a plain answer, I will give one with horns and teeth. It is this, that I am bound by the scriptures which I have quoted. My conscience is submissive to the word of God, therefore I may not, and will not recant, because to act against my conscience is unholy and unsafe—so help me God!"

The Emperor then declared his intention to regard Luther as an heretic, and an attempt was made to violate the promise made him, of safe conduct back to Wittemburg. Indeed it was hinted that the best thing would be to burn him there and then, and cast his ashes like those of John Huss into the Rhine. But 400 knights and 8,000 footmen gave the Emperor to understand that they would defend Luther against Rome to the death! Accordingly on the 26th of April he was ordered to depart, and left Worms the hero of the German nation. "Single-handed he had fought the battle of Germany against the Pope, and endangered his life for his country." And in this victory over brute force and against mental bondage, Luther vindicated the right of every man to exercise liberty of thought and speech, in matters appertaining to his eternal well-being.

What follows may be briefly told. Charles and the Pope entered into an alliance, offensive and defensive, against the Reformer. On the eighth day of May they signed a treaty, binding themselves to crush out this insurrection against Rome. The Emperor then issued an edict against Luther, condemning him to be burnt, as his books had been, but elsewhere, all over Germany, they were read

still more and more. Meanwhile Luther scattered over the land an account of the doings of the Diet of Worms, and roused popular indignation against his cruel judges. His friends carried him safely to the castle of Wurtburg, where, although silent in speech, he busily engaged in translating the Bible into German. The mob, in his absence, became wild and exasperated against Rome, and meditated revenge. Luther, hearing of this, left the castle of Wurtburg, and at the risk of his life suddenly appeared in his old pulpit in Wittemberg to calm the excitement. The revolutionary prophets of that age were dismissed, and order restored, and before the end of the year the New Testament was translated into the German tongue, and the Bible acknowledged as the rule of faith.

The peasants' war which followed, and raged for years, and during which over 100,000 perished, was strongly objected to by Luther, who opposed the use of the sword against the civil power. This war, wrongly ascribed to the Reformation movement of Luther, was in reality a revolt of the poor German peasantry against the yoke of the feudal serfdom. Had timely reforms been granted, revolution and bloodshed would have been averted.

The collateral results of the Reformation in Germany, were the suppression or purification of the monasteries, and the use of their vast revenues for educational purposes, or for the preaching of the gospel to the poor. Monks and nuns were allowed to marry. The German language was used in worship, instead of Latin. The youths were taught in the schools their native tongue, and Luther's German Bible and German hymns came into general use; and when in 1529 the Diet of Spires passed a decree, re-enacting the edict of the Diet of Worms, the Lutheran princes protested, and so earned for themselves and all likeminded men the name of Protestant, while Protestant schools, and states adopting Lutheran doctrines, sprang up in every corner of the land.

While Luther lived, the Emperor never carried out his threat, to crush the Protestant heresy by the sword. The peace of Augsburg followed, with its legal recognition of the Protestant states, but it was after all but a mock toleration ; for after the great Reformer's death, the German nation was plunged into the terrible thirty years' war, and to this day bears the marks of the terrible ordeal through which it passed, before her national freedom and unity were gained.

The closing years of the Reformer were marked by frequent attacks of sickness, and the death of friends and relations ; and his mind was often the prey of despondency, caused by sorrow and dissatisfaction at the impiety and immorality of the age, and the conduct of public affairs. "I am an old man," he says, "and no more of any use. I have finished my course ; there remaineth only that God gather me to my fathers, and give my body to the worms." As the end drew near, his prayers were answered : "Pray God that He may give me a peaceful and happy death." His thoughts went back to his birthplace, and his conversation, which related to death, eternity, and the recognition of friends in heaven, was unusually rich and impressive. And so, on the 10th of February; 1546, with his hands folded upon his breast, he repeated thrice the words, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit—thou hast redeemed me, thou faithful God," and gently passed away.

Luther's name and memory are imperishable. His was the mighty mind which spoke for freedom, million tongued, in tones that still thunder round the world, and down the ages. He had his faults, because he was mortal, but his regal bearing and heroic deeds were sublime. His greatness is not, as has been said, of a polished work of art, but of an Alpine mountain, with towering peaks, rough granite blocks, deep abysses, sweeping torrents, fresh fountains and green meadows. His character was transparent for honesty, as the sunlight. For dissimulation and cowardice he had

the bitterest scorn. He was a son of thunder, and never gained perfect mastery of his passion, but the age in which he lived, and the men he had to deal with, demanded such a spirit. The man of such serene temper that nothing can excite, is not the highest type of christian character. In his own language he was rough, boisterous, stormy, and altogether warlike, born to fight innumerable devils and monsters, to remove stumps and stones, to cut down thistles and thorns, and to clear the wild woods. But underneath the lion, there was the gentleness of the lamb. Taking him all in all, we may say of him, in the language of Thomas Carlyle: "He was a true man, great in intellect, in courage, affection and integrity; one of the most loveable and precious of men; a right spiritual hero; a true son of nature, for whom these centuries, and many that are yet to come, will be thankful to heaven." To-day, both Roman Catholic countries and Protestant kingdoms unite to honor his memory, and the wide world ranks 'him among her noblest benefactors.

On occasion of such an anniversary, we cannot but contrast the condition of the world and the church at the present moment with what it was 400 years ago. The church was then the sworn antagonist of both political and religious freedom. Church and state were welded together by chains of iron, and the civil magistrate made to yield to the mandates of the Pope. The crown of every monarch was his gift. The hierarchy held the world in fee simple, and crowned and excommunicated kings at will. The stroke of one man's pen absolved the ruled from the ruler, and made countries so interdicted scenes of desolation. The church bell was seldom heard, and the earth "was denied its office to hold the bodies of the dead." Salvation was offered for money, and not on the grounds of free grace, while idolatry and superstition mocked men's reason, and rendered impossible all intelligent and rational worship of the Divine Being. A faithful devotee of the church in

that age had his choice of worshipping the following relics: "A splinter of Noah's ark; a finger of St. Andrew; a finger of John the Baptist; the thumb of St. Thomas; a tooth of our Lord; a rib of our Lord; the hem of our Lord's garment which cured the diseased woman; the seamless coat of our Lord; a tear which our Lord shed over Lazarus, preserved by an angel, who gave it in a vial to Mary Magdalene; two sprigs from the rod with which our Saviour was scourged; the crocks in which the Son of God turned the water into wine at the bridal feast of Cana; the rod of Moses, with which he performed his miracles; a feather of the Holy Ghost; a feather of the angel Gabriel; the slippers of the antediluvian Enoch; and some of the rays of the star that appeared to the Magi." If the human mind has been emancipated from such thraldom that crushed out all manly and noble aspirations; if the right of private judgment is now enjoyed without let or hindrance; if we are permitted freedom of speech and action, and can read from an unfettered Bible, without the fear of priestly anathema, let us gratefully remember Martin Luther in our joy.

Luther lived only to see the dawn of the glorious day of intellectual freedom, that the world now enjoys. He passed away when his beloved fatherland was in the pangs of national strife, and hurrying on to bloodshed. With something like prophetic eye, he seemed to anticipate sad days of sorrow, when the faith of his trusted followers would be tested, with the alternatives of death or ignominious servitude to an alien power. And in just such a crisis was Scotland when John Knox laid himself down to die, saying: "The world is weary of me, so am I of it." But these men planted the strong roots of the liberties we now enjoy. We gather the fruit, and prayer, and efforts of men, who, hundreds of years ago passed away with unsatisfied eyes—the hot eyes stifled after the storms of life, and the seal of death upon the faithful brow.

There are some people at the present day, who think that the world were all the better, if such men as Martin Luther had never lived. They hate strife and deplore men of impetuous iron will, who will face death rather than yield their manhood. Not such have been the heroes of history, either sacred or profane. They were men of piety, but at the same time of large and comprehensive views, of executive ability, and untiring energy, who never left undone any task they had begun, and who scorned ease and luxury, if God's truth demanded self-denial and exposure to danger. They have their successors, but few in number. The present age is largely effeminate, compared with that of Martin Luther. It abounds in obscure, mediocre men, whose piety may be sincere, but who wield no influence whatever, over their fellow men, who busy themselves with petty pastimes and undertakings, that men of Luther's manhood would have scorned, and contentedly sit at ease, thanking God that their lot has been cast in less troublesome times!

There are others greatly alarmed lest the commemoration of Luther's birthday, should do harm instead of good. They deprecate uncharitable utterances and ill-feeling between the members of that church, whose servile dogmas Luther opposed 400 years ago, and the present generation of Protestants. Not that they—good souls—believe in error, but because converts are not to be made by denunciation, but by loving appeals and the exhibition of gentle lives. And so say we. But the man who thinks and tries with soft words to bridge over the chasm, that exists between such hostile systems of religion as Protestantism and Romanism, is a fool. We gladly acknowledge the reformation in that church since the days of Luther. Tetzel, with his wholesale offer of indulgences, would receive less toleration now than in the days of Luther. The injurious traffic which aroused the Reformer's wrath, is considerably abridged, at least in our latitude. Nor would we forget the noble,

simple, unimpeachable lives, that men, born and trained in the Catholic church, have lived, and the value of their labors and writings. Sweeter, nobler natures, than the school to which such men as Fenelon and Blaise Paschal belonged, have never breathed. The sacrifices that her priests have made for the dogmas they believe in, are worthy of commendation. I would, too, that some of the women in our Protestant churches—without immuring themselves in nunneries—did but emulate the self-denial and gentleness and patient tenderness of those sisterhoods, who shrink from no office, however menial, by the bedside of the sick and dying—whether in the hospital or in the trenches—and proffer their services irrespective of creed or country. But when all this is cheerfully admitted, let us not forget, that it is not by ignoring fundamental differences, that keep two great communions apart, that the cause of truth is to be served and good will continued, but by manly declaration of our belief, and unswerving loyalty to conscience.

Germany has given many men of genius since the days of Luther to the world. Her seats of learning have long been haunts of students, who leave the college halls of their native land to drink the inspiration at the fountain head, and from scholars whose attainments in special subjects have made them famous, and reflected glory upon the nation. Her soldiers, trained from youth for active service, are all but invincible upon the battle field. Her statesmen have achieved diplomatic triumphs that other nations envy ; but better than all these are the men and women in the humbler ranks of life, who, with a strength of will and stubborn tenacity of purpose, overcome all obstacles and carve out for themselves honorable positions in every walk of life. What makes them so? Why are they not sluggish, indolent and unambitious, like the natives of more balmy climes? Why are they sought after by the people of the American continent as in the main, frugal, honest, peaceful, law-abiding subjects, and why are they invariably found, when

occasion arises, in the vanguard of the fight? Simply because the spirit of the past still lingers in the nation—

Their altars and their fires,
The green graves of their sires,

are not forgotten. That matchless fortitude that enabled Martin Luther to dare oppression is not extinguished, but ready when called upon to maintain the right.

Since the days of the Reformer, liberty of conscience has been fought for in other lands, sometimes with but partial success. The green sod has again and again been stained by the blood of brave patriotic spirits. But the day is near when the right to worship God, unfettered by state authority, shall everywhere be regarded as the inalienable birthright of every man. Stronger than brute force is the omnipotence of truth. As Lord Brougham said more than half a century ago, "Let the soldier be abroad, if he will, he can do nothing in this age. The schoolmaster is abroad, and I trust to him, armed with his primer, against the soldier in full military array."

The outworn rite, the old abuse,
The pious fraud, transparent grown,
The good held captive in the use
Of wrong alone.

These wait their doom,
And fresher life the world shall draw
From their decay.

God works in all things.
Wake thou and watch!—the world is gray
With morning light!

Steadily down the march of ages, above the disputation and ambitions of despots, and in spite of the secret machinations of crowned oligarchs, who join hands to stay the triumphal car of lib-

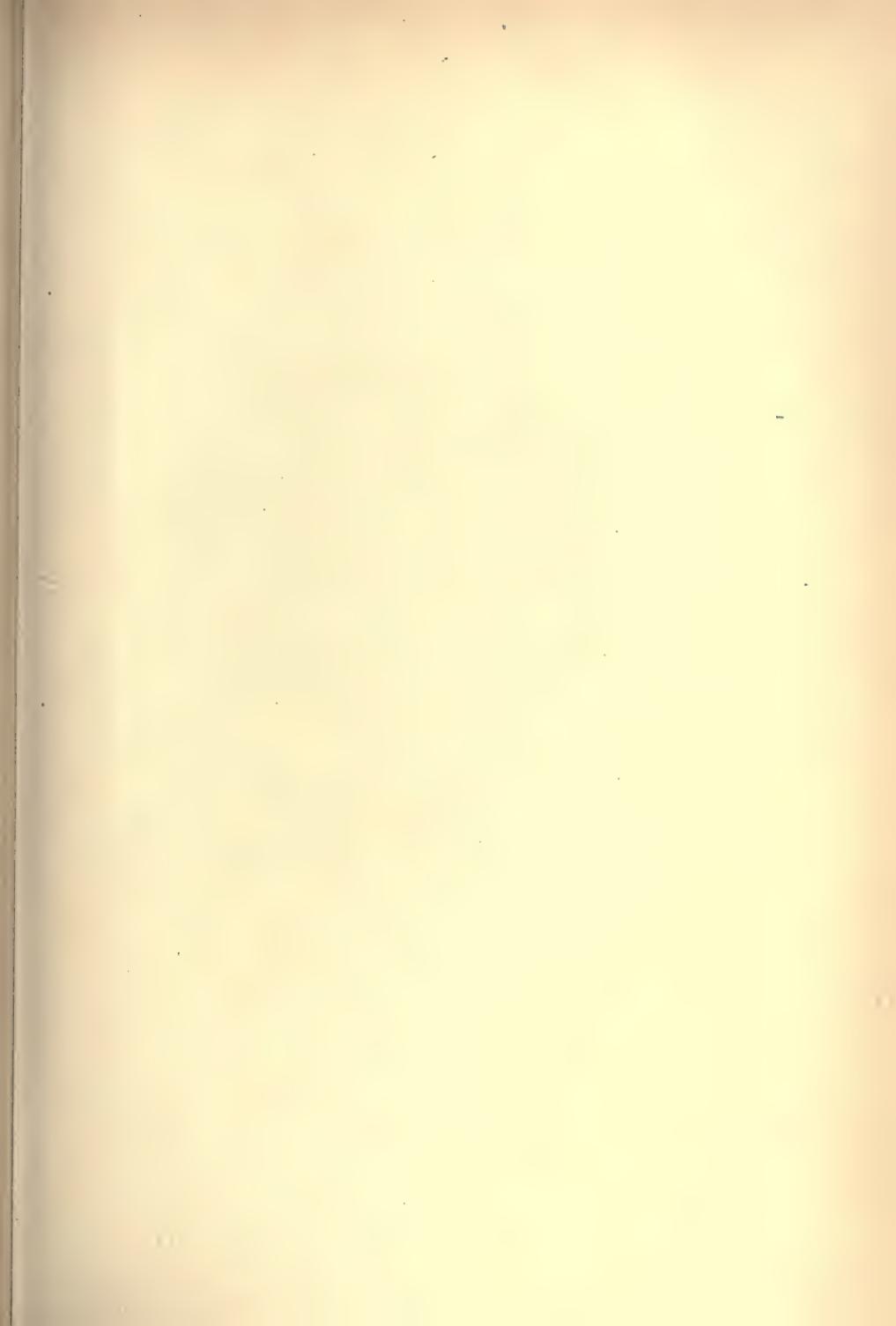
erty, she rushes on, destroying in her progress hoary systems of superstition that have long held the human soul in fetters. It cannot be otherwise, for—

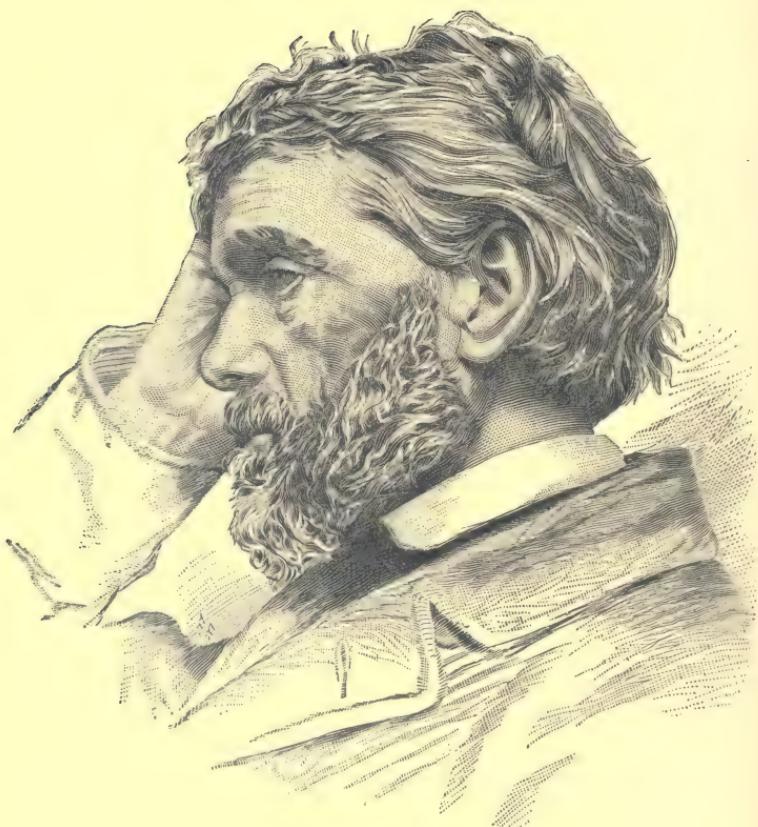
Freedom's battle once begun,
Bequeathed by bleeding sire to son,
Though battled oft, is ever won.

God knows, I have no ill will toward the members of the church of Rome. Many of them are my friends. Within her pale, despite of what Protestants deem unscriptural dogmas and gross idolatry, souls yearning for fellowship with heaven, may find it, and make the crucifix the symbol of their faith. I have no quarrel with her devotees, who up to the light they possess, follow faithfully her mandates, and relinquish their reason to the superior judgment of the church, under the threat of pains and penalties that embrace both worlds. In all that relates to liberty of conscience, Protestants and Romanists have equal rights, but when the Pope or any other man claims infallibility and the right to dictate to others, on the pain of excommunication, what they shall believe, I resist such presumptuous demands. They may be exacted from slaves—never from free men! I recognize the reigning sovereign of the realm, as supreme in civil matters, within constitutional rule; I give to my maker the direct homage of my heart, without the intervention of saint, or angel, or pope! What shall be the ultimate result of this great conflict of the ages? Which of these great spiritual forces that have for centuries fought for the conquest of the world, shall gain the victory, I cannot for a moment doubt. I do not deprecate the vast influence—the magnificent organization—the ten thousand agencies and emissaries and willing servants that the Vatican controls. Her tactics are marvelously wise, and adapted to satisfy the passions of the human soul. It may be, as Macaulay says: “That she shall exist in undiminished vigor, when some traveller from New England, shall in the

midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London bridge, to sketch the ruins of St. Paul." But it will be as a reformed church, freed from the shackles that now, but cannot always be worn, by men of intelligence who know their accountability to God, for their beliefs and actions, and who, without intercession of priests, enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus! God hasten that day, when there shall be but one fold, and one shepherd. Amen.







THOMAS CARLYLE.

Thomas Carlyle.

“In these days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

—Matthew 3, v. 1, 2.

THOMAS CARLYLE.



WHEN John the Baptist appeared, the world was in a state of mental agitation. The Old Testament prophets had filled and fired the Jewish heart with fond expectations of a new kingdom, and a coming deliverer. Uneasiness, discontent, and yearnings after something better, characterized the age. His mission was to rebuke the sinful practices of the day, and prepare for the coming of Christ. For five hundred years there had been no reforming prophet. He was the last of the race, and in many respects the greatest of all, and formed the connecting link and transition between Judaism and Christianity.

The prominent feature in the Jewish religion of that period was its hypocrisy—its unreality—hollowness—ostentation—barren orthodoxy, and formalism. The Scribes and Pharisees, however against whom John the Baptist directed his fiercest scorn and stinging rebukes, were in some respects far in advance of many professors of religion at the present day. They attended with a praiseworthy diligence to all their forms of worship, and in the sight of all men performed their devotions. They were loyally attached to the doctrines and discipline of their church. They gave liberally

and ungrudgingly for the support of ordinances—not resorting to the questionable methods for raising monies, common at the present moment; and their zeal and active efforts to make converts and proselytes knew no bounds. Their morality and righteousness was good, so far as it went, but it was regarded as sufficient for salvation, and as a ground of merit and reward in the sight of God. They boasted of their virtues, and sought the good opinion of men by performing certain outward acts of devotion, after a mechanical and routine fashion, rather than yielding spontaneously to God the sincere homage of the heart.

Despising such hypocrisy, and in order to mark his contempt for the reputed leaders of the synagogue John the Baptist withdrew himself to the wilderness—living solitary and apart—brooding over the divine communications of heaven, which from time to time he uttered in the ears of his astonished countrymen.

His education was in the desert: far from refined society, where destitute of luxuries, and living on the plainest fare, he became inured to hardships and fitted to become the mouthpiece of God to men. Thus prepared, like all great reformers of the past and present, he confronted the bitterest enemies of christianity, and gave form and definitions to dreams of a better day, for the Jewish nation and the world. He became the interpreter of grand and startling truths, which Grecian culture and philosophy never could discover or reveal to men.

The burden of his theme was repentance. He did not attempt to settle theological disputes, nor form any one school of religious thought. But he endeavored to lead men to the practice of holiness, and the abandonment of sin. “Repent.” “Bring forth fruits meet for repentance.” “Flee from the wrath to come.” These were the keyntes of his message. He sought after no refinement of manner, or delicacy of language. He listened to no excuses, he had neither smiles, nor conciliation for the formalists

and infidels of the age, but openly denounced their wickedness, and unmasked the secret abominations that were concealed under the garb of sanctimoniousness, and affected holiness.

His mission was a solemn and serious one. The duty imposed upon him was terrible. To accuse men of the grossest crimes, and the most loathsome wickedness ; to rebuke the proud ; to uncover crooked and dishonest policies ; to pierce the conscience, awaken reflection, and produce conviction, was no easy task. Yet he did all this. Society was shaken to its very depths. Alone, unaided, and unbefriended, he overcame the passions of the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and from their ranks made converts to the truth. Crowds attended his ministry, and listened with personal application of his words. "There went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." Such is the power possessed by a sincere man, who speaks in the name of God, to disarm opposition, and overcome the bitterest prejudices.

Every age has its reformers, in church and state. They are of two classes. (*a*) Those made by the times. (*b*) Those made for, and in advance of the times. Of the latter class was John. His preaching was what the age demanded. He had not the fancy, imagination, or sublime visions of an Isaiah, or the tender lamentations of a Jeremiah, or the cloudy mysteriousness of a Daniel or an Ezekiel, but he had the direct and telling home thrusts that produce instant effect. His words, accompanied by heaven's fire, acted instantaneously upon the conscience.

Such preachers are not usually welcome. In proportion as forms and rules are set aside, and the corruptions of society dealt with, and immoralities and dishonesties unveiled, the prophet and the preacher are traduced. It is said, "The servants of Christ should be meek and lowly, like their Master—their message is peace and good will to men ; the gospel should be like the falling

dew, upon the hearts of sinners." All so far true. The dew is needful, but so also is the thunder peal and the lightning flash. Indeed the preacher's mission is ended when no alarm is needed. The preaching of John the Baptist was practical, searching, pointed and withering. Such was Paul's. Such was Stephen's. Such was Christ's. One of the marked characteristics of the Apostle's teaching, was the unconditional requisite of moral purity. The very first step towards the new life, was personal purification. They did not call upon men to join the church, or begin a round of ceremonies, or become partisans of this or that creed or school, so much as to repent of their sins, and accept with undivided heart of the Lord Jesus Christ.

John the Baptist was not a prudent man, in the ordinary acceptance of the word. He did not speak in silken tones. He preferred a good conscience to the honor and approval of men.

Prudential preaching is not the want of this age. There is too much of it already. Plain, homely, earnest appeals are needed. Human nature is very much what it was in the days of the Baptist. Nominal professors are as prevalent, and the masses are as impenitent and indifferent. Conviction of sin must be aimed at in every sermon. Invariably it precedes genuine conversion. War first—then peace: the ploughshare, then the harvest: the blasting of the rock, before the building rises: demolition, before reformation. The hurricane clears away the poisonous miasma, that breeds disease and death. And so the blast of God's threatenings must reach the conscience, before hardened sinners are melted into tears.

John's preaching was not a complete gospel by any means. But it prepared the way for the coming of Christ. His moral dissection made men feel their need of a physician.

Like John, we call upon men to repent. What it means every man knows instinctively. Turn round. Change your purpose. Mourn over, while ye confess your sins. Hate evil and turn to

holiness. Men have power to repent, and break away from their sins. But the innate haughtiness of the human heart must first be subdued, for pride and repentance cannot dwell in the same soul.

The crowds that waited upon John's ministry gave evidence of their sincerity by "confessing their sins." There is a way of confessing sin that is of no moral value, and indicates no moral change. Men are perfectly willing as a rule, to confess their sinfulness, and the original and utter depravity of their nature, but they dislike to confess those special acts of wickedness, that make up the depravity. Indeed in many cases the fact of original depravity is pled as a valid excuse for the wilful commission of sin. Men are held to be, by a natural law of the universe, unable to avoid sinning, so that just as mighty tornadoes uproot trees and overturn dwellings so temptation prostrates men and entangles them in vice and wrong doing. It is not difficult to find men saying: "I am a sinner—all men sin—nothing else is to be expected, but that men should sin. Sin is as universal in its grasp as the law of gravitation." But how few confess to particular acts of wickedness, to pride and selfishness, dishonorable actions, violations of truth and purity, envyings and jealousies, back-biting, false witness bearing, illicit pleasures, and the long dark catalogue of evils that mark the daily life of millions, dishonoring to God, while debasing to our common humanity? God judges men not in the mass, but as individuals; nor is pardon given but to individuals. And thus it follows, that such general confession of sin means nothing and effects nothing. It is a mere pretence to humility—a palliation to a guilty conscience—a mocking of that broken-heartedness and contrition of spirit, which alone is acceptable in the sight of God. Nay further, a man may confess to a special sin, and yet be none the better for it. You meet with such every day in the world. "I know I have a failing. I sometimes do what I ought not to do I am sorry for it." Next day or next hour, straightway and

deliberately, "the failing" is repeated, and the man flatters himself that the confession of his special sin deserves commendation, while the sin itself is hardly worthy of condemnation. Men who are in reality sorry for their sins, put forth tremendous efforts to overcome them, and by the assistance of God's grace succeed.

To all such we say, Repent—repent now. Flee from wrath to come. Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance. "The axe is laid unto the root of the tree: every tree, therefore, which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." Salvation's overtures may soon end. The Judge is at the door. Eternity is at hand. God is merciful;—yes, but he is towards the wilfully impenitent an angry God. Let no man deceive himself, or calm conscience by imagining otherwise. The inner consciousness asserts it, and experience teaches it. His wrath against defiant sinners is unappeasable, nor can it be escaped.

On another occasion, this same John the Baptist, seeing Jesus coming to him, said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world." Calls to repentance were in vain, without the hope of forgiveness. This is the gospel we preach, for if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

During the past week,* there has passed away a man who, to many of the present generation, seemed very much a John the Baptist—a voice crying in the wilderness. He occupied no official position, and he sought no honors. His private life was secluded; his dwelling an humble one; his tastes and manners simple; and yet no man of the present century has been more widely known or more highly respected. The outlines of his life may be condensed within a few sentences: Born on the 4th December, 1795, in the

* February 4th, 1881.

small village of Ecclefechan, in Scotland—his parents in very moderate circumstances, but respected for their moral worth and superior intelligence—Thomas Carlyle began life with advantages perhaps superior to many Scottish youths who have risen to distinction, but with nothing to indicate the grand achievements of his life. His humble parentage was his boast. “Wouldst thou rather be a peasant’s son, who knew, were it never so rudely, there was a God in heaven and in man ; or a duke’s son, that only knew there were two and thirty quarters on the family coach?” This question, which occurs in one of his earliest books, was emphatically answered by his life.

From the parish school, after two or three years training, Carlyle was sent to the Annan gymnasium, where he was prepared for the Edinburgh University. Here he distinguished himself by his mastery of the subjects taught, and excelled in mathematics. Then he studied theology, and delivered a sermon before his professors, which gave high promise of future power and excellence as a preacher. Troubled, however, with “paroxysms of doubt,” he felt that he could not honestly pursue the path intended for him by his parents, and so after studying law, he finally settled down to be a village schoolmaster of the old type—stern, methodical, and thorough. We have a glimpse of his life at this stage, when he assisted the great Edward Irving in the seminary at Kirkaldy, in which he pays a touching tribute to his dear friend’s memory. He says :

“ I had gone through the University of Edinburgh, and had been invited by an old friend to become associated with him in the conduct of a school at Kirkaldy. It was Edward Irving—my old friend Edward Irving. Together we talked and wrought and thought ; together we strove, by virtue of birch and book, to initiate the urchins into what is called the rudiments of learning, until, at length, the hand of the Lord was laid upon him, and the voice of his God spake to him saying : “ Arise, and get thee hence, for this

is not thy rest." And he arose and girded up his loins, and putting the trumpet of the Almighty to his lips, he blew such a blast as that men started up with surprise, and said that the like of it had not been seen since the days of the covenant itself. And from Scotland he came to this great Babel ; and he stood up in the pulpit of the Hatton Garden chapel, the eyes of him blazing, and the herculean form of him erect. And the great and the learned, the high and the titled, the gifted and the beautiful, came around about him, and sat mute and spell-bound listening to his wonderful words. And they thought—for fools will ever think according to their folly, which is the law of their being—they thought that because they were looking at him, he was looking at them. He was not looking at them at all. He was trying to do what no man can do and live—trying to see God face to face. I have heard that the eagle's eye suffers eclipse ; that the curtain of darkness falls over the pupil of his eye by the steadfast gazing at the brightness of the sun. It was thus with my poor friend Irving. The fools said—let the fools have their way, they know no better—the fools said that Irving was daft—that his head was turned with the popular applause. He was not daft, he was dazed. The curtains of darkness fell over the eagle's eye by too steadfast gazing at the sun. In blindness and loneliness he sobbed the great heart of him to sleep."

After this, Carlyle became tutor in a private family, and finally retired from contact with men, to startle the world by his quaint massive sayings, which, for more than fifty years, have made him the best known man in Britain—a name worthy of enrolment with the mighties of his age, and of a burial place in the consecrated shrine of Westminster, had he not preferred to lie in the graveyard of his native village ; for as Tennyson says :

'T is little ; but it looks in truth
As if the quiet bones were blest
Among familiar names to rest,
And in the places of his youth.

Referring to his early years, in an address delivered as Rector of Edinburgh University, in 1866, he says :

" There are now fifty-six years gone, last November, since I first entered your city, a boy of not quite fourteen—fifty-six years ago—to attend classes here and gain knowledge of all kinds, I knew not what, with feelings of wonder and awe-struck expectation ; and now, after a long, long course, this is what we have come to. There is something touching and tragic, and yet at the same time beautiful, to see the third generation, as it were, of my dear old native land rising up and saying, ' Well, you are not altogether an unworthy laborer in the vineyard ; you have toiled through a variety of fortunes, and have had many judges.' As the old proverb says, ' He that builds by the wayside has many masters.' We must expect a variety of judges, but the voice of Young Scotland, through you, is of some value to me, and I return you many thanks for it, though I cannot describe my emotions to you, and, perhaps, they will be much more conceivable if expressed in silence."

No man, indeed, has been judged so variously as Thomas Carlyle. By some he has almost been worshipped ; by others wondered at ; by others ridiculed ; but in every case his powerful intellect and weird-like prophecies have been acknowledged as a powerful factor in the social history of the age ; if not in the moulding of men's opinion, in causing reflection and turning attention to problems that are as yet unsolved in the history of nations. When we find him spoken of as the "greatest bibliographic writer of the age," and acknowledged by eminent men now living as having exerted an influence upon their style and mode of thought beyond all other writers, we can easily imagine how regal must have been his mind, and how deep the impression made upon his contemporaries.

It is not necessary that we should agree with such a man in his opinions in order to unite with the world of letters in laying our humble tribute upon his grave. He sought the good of his race

in his own peculiar way, and endeavored, by a bluntness of speech and merciless castigation of all that was hollow-hearted and hypocritical, to prepare the world for the dawn of a better and brighter end. He was a profound worshipper of what he called the divinity in man, and indulged the hope that this hidden nobleness—this internal light of the human soul—would produce a perfect manhood, and usher in a golden age. To our mind, such a prospect is baseless, apart from the humanizing and evangelizing influences of God's spirit upon men, and on society at large. His views also regarding the treatment of criminals, were hardly in keeping with that tenderness, which, while it hates sin, loves and pities, and seeks to reclaim the sinner. The new testament certainly does not teach that "Revenge and the natural hatred of scoundrels is a correct and divine feeling in the mind." But in spite of such marked eccentricities, which he seemed to hold more tenaciously as he grew older, his downright earnestness and honesty; his shrewd common sense; his hatred of all shams and pretension; his denunciation of selfishness; his contempt for aristocratic birth and pedigree, when destitute of moral worth, and his oft-repeated maxim that rank, power and possession should be graduated by ability, endear him to all lovers of humanity, wherever civilization and manliness prevail.

There are two aspects in which the world may be looked at in the present day—as getting worse, or as getting better. Thomas Carlyle thought the former. He saw few redeeming features, and no bright spots in the horizon. His mental vision of late years was too much confined to what was passing under his eye in the great metropolis of Britain—certainly not the best place to gain impressions of human progress. The policies and diplomacies of governments based upon mere expediency, or maintained by threats of arms; the monster iniquities, daily committed and chronicled in the daily press; the astounding rascalities of men in

high places, and the dark crimes committed under the very shadow of hoary cathedrals and within the sound of a hundred Sabbath bells ; and the frequent tolling of the knell at Newgate, as it hurried off some poor wretch to eternity ; all these things shocked his moral sense, and led him hastily and erroneously, we think, to conclude that civilization was being exchanged for the barbarism of the dark ages. To him, indeed, all things seemed unfixed, and “floating distractedly in an ocean of talk.” He looked upon the present with scorn and disgust, as “days of endless calamity, disruption, confusion worse confounded—days of utter despair ; there must be a new world, if there is to be any world at all !”

Intensely conservative, and yet, strange to say, intensely radical and revolutionizing, he was also in his religious views—not perhaps fickle—but, at least, undecided and inexplicable. He certainly cannot be classed with philosophic atheists of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, he cannot be ranked among the earnest defenders and propagators of the Christian faith. His mind seems to have been in some way, and to some degree, warped, and his earlier predilections in favor of the simple trust of his fathers changed to doubt and emphatic denunciation of creeds and dogmas. One of his critics sums up his creed as follows: Belief in the immortality of the soul, the existence of a God, and the responsibility of man to God ; denial of the divinity of Christ, the resurrection of the body, and final judgment. But we can hardly come to such a conclusion from his writings. Dogmatic in the highest degree himself, he had but little tolerance for formulated beliefs. But he never assailed the foundations of the christian faith, nor denied the existence and power of conscience, nor spoke irreverently of the divine being. It were strange, nay, almost impossible that he should, trained as he was by a father, who regarded the highest form of manhood attainable, that of the christian, and who was remarkable for his profound religious fer-

vor.* Carlyle was a passionate admirer of the Covenanters in his boyhood days, and never ceased to cherish their memory with a strength and tenderness that developed with his appreciation of their nobility, and assigned them a lofty niche in the gallery of the world's best heroes. If he turned away with detestation, and some degree of bitterness, from the religious life of the present, it was because of his fond idolatry of such men, and the contrast presented in our day of weakness, insincerity and indifference, both in church and state.

Rugged in exterior, but tender in heart; morose and melancholy, yet quaint in a humor peculiarly his own; unforgiving, yet pitying; doubting and dreaming, yet held by the moorings of his youth to an eternal, all-wise, just and righteous God,—the hoary sage, the fast friend, the affectionate husband, the marvellous word-painter, the doleful philosopher, has passed away into that far-off infinite immensity, that for years troubled and distracted his soul. He now knows all.

The veiled dark portal,
Goal of all mortal,

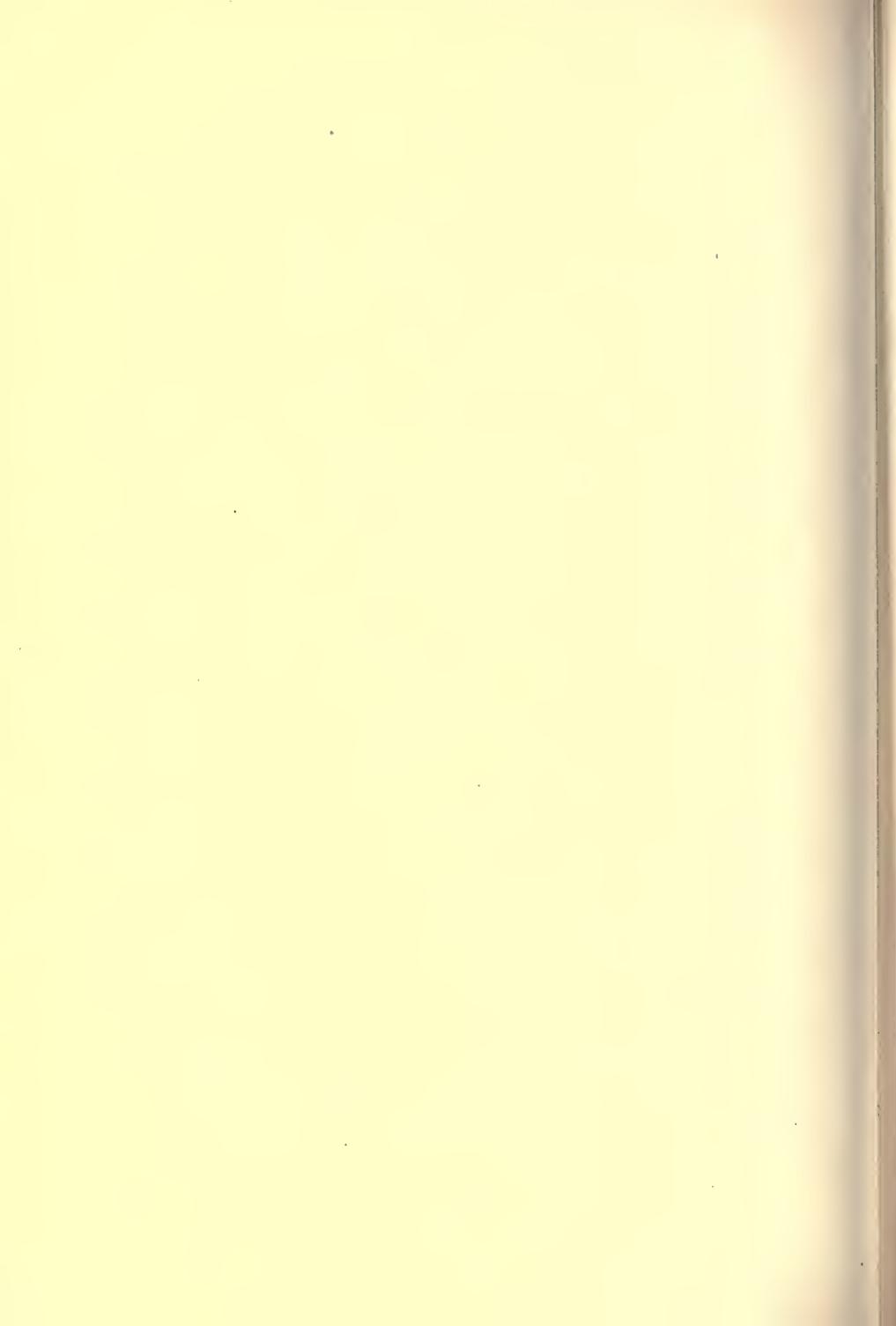
has been passed, and the stillness and fullness of eternity entered upon. Further we may not follow him.

*Speaking of Carlyle's father, a writer says: "Measured by the ordinary standards of the world, how cramped it is! how short in its range! how insignificant! What does one builder of peasants' cottages more or less matter? But, then, can we look at that life in that way? Can we look at any life in that way! It is plain to us all that we cannot, for life everywhere establishes connections and creates consequences. . . . Indeed, it is doubtful if the real sum total of any man's life can be stated until the end of all things. This humble mechanic, for instance, was the father of a son whose name is known and honored wherever the English language is spoken. To James Carlyle's narrow life in the village and in the kirk, and in his own cottage, must be added the sum of Thomas Carlyle's life, and the influence of his writings, and the influence of the men whose thought has been stimulated or shaped by those writings. And so the son himself says: "Let me not mourn for my father; let me do worthily of him; so shall he still live even here in me, and his worth plant itself honorably forth into new generations."

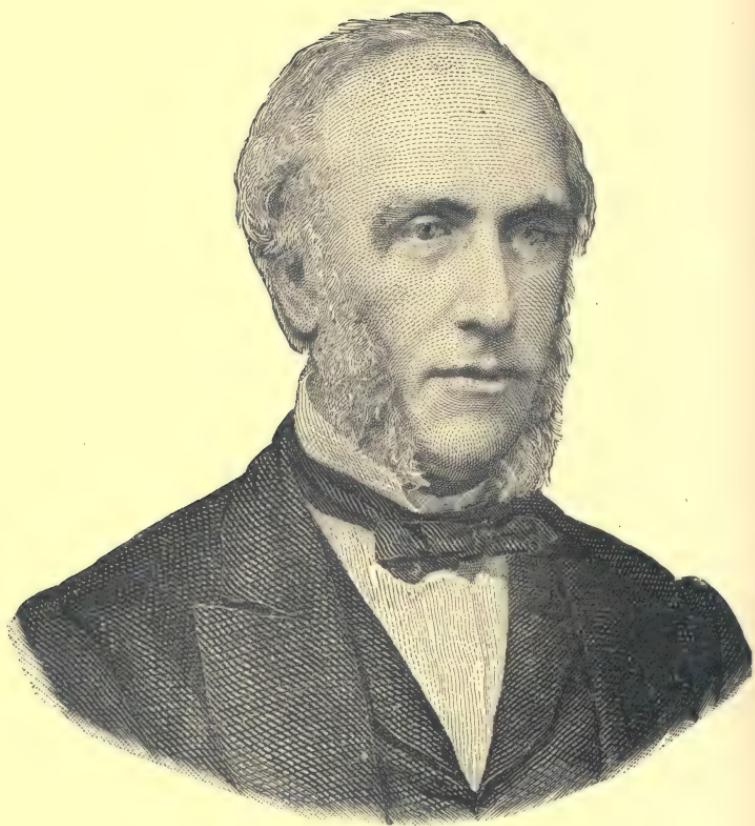
No further seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode :
There they alike in trembling hope repose,
The bosom of his father and his God.

Carlyle's life and works have not been in vain. His terse thoughts and strange axiomatic utterances will not soon be forgotten. But the grandest life is incomplete, and the highest aspirations of genius remain unfulfilled on earth. So with Thomas Carlyle. His aims were grand—who can doubt it? But of their failure, who can gainsay it? The prophet fretted away his great life, battering against shams with little tangible results. Indeed, the nearer he approached the grave, the more unsatisfactory to himself did his work appear. The more than half century spent in fiery invective against social anomalies, seemed to result in nothing. Nor can any merely negative philosophy cure the world's sorrows, or cleanse its plague spots. The graphic and touching resources of Charles Dickens, and the biting sarcasm and scorn of a Thackeray, are helpful in calling attention to social wrongs, and unmasking traditional follies, but there is needed the positive, constructive regenerating power of the gospel, "to arrange the world in beauty, so that there shall be no discord and no lamentation any more." It is Divine love for human souls that alone conciliates and conquers the world. He that would successfully elevate the masses—equalize inequalities—redress wrongs—remove cruelties, and banish wretchedness from earth, must not only cry aloud and spare not, but must point to "The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."









GEORGE BROWN.

George Brown.

“And the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour.”

—1st Kings, 11, v. 28.

“Thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters; as a man falleth before wicked men, so fellest thou. And all the people wept again over him. And the King said unto his servants, know ye not, that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel.”

2nd Samuel, 3, 34, 38.

GEORGE BROWN.

HESE words were spoken by King David, as he wept over the grave of Abner. Abner had been commander-in-chief of the armies of Israel under King Saul. For years after Saul's death, he maintained a fruitless warfare, in alliance with Ishbosheth, against the reign of David, but eventually, on condition that he should have command of the armies of the hitherto rival kingdoms, he made overtures to David for a re-union and reconciliation. Abner's proposals found favor with the king, and Joab, who was commander-in-chief of David's armies, was set aside for the sake of Abner. Dreading the superior influence which such a man as Abner might have over the king, and eager to take vengeance upon Abner on account of his brother Asahel, who perished in a former feud, Joab stealthily calls Abner aside, in the gate of the palace, and under the guise of friendship thrust his sword into his body. The king, hearing of this foul crime, not only lamented his death, but gave orders for a general mourning, he and his people following the bier to the grave, and weeping aloud. The unexpected, and peculiarly atrocious manner of his death, is set forth in the words now read: "Thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters: as a man fall-

eth before wicked men, so fellest thou. And all the people wept again over him. And the king said unto his servants, know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel."

There has been laid in the grave, since last we assembled in the house of God, a kingly man,—one who for many years has by unanimous consent been ranked among the princes of the land. Over his grave the people have also wept, and a feeling of unfeigned sadness has possessed all hearts, because of his untimely end. As christian citizens, it surely becomes us, when the righteous perish, that we should lay it to heart, and endeavor to read and profit by the lessons of their lives.

To say that the lamented statesman and journalist was a man of wonderful force of character and intellect, is what all admit. By singular energy and high aspiration, he acquired an influence in Canada second to none,—if not indeed superior to all his compeers. His advent fell upon times most propitious to foster and develop the versatile talents and prodigious powers he possessed. So that if the man was raised up by Providence to do a special work, the circumstances of the country were favorable to the man. It has been said, and I think with great truth, that a great man is only possible under certain conditions—that every genius can be accounted for ; that he is the product of his time—has come forth in answer to a call—in a word, that he is a response, and not a new creation. It was the condition of the church, and the protests which had been made against darkness and bondage, which made a Luther possible. Cromwell would have farmed in Huntingdon to the end of his days, probably, had Charles been a wiser and a better king. But though a man cannot create circumstances to suit himself, and afford opportunity for becoming conspicuous, he can take things as they are, and by the force of his character change

and reform existing wrongs and abuses, until the theories and principles he has long believed in, become incarnated with the very life's blood of the nation. This is what George Brown did in Canada. Doubtless, had he lived longer, he would have attempted more, but enough has been accomplished to indicate the place to which he is entitled, in the estimation of a people for whom he labored with a zeal and unselfishness that knew no bounds.

It needs not that I repeat the story of his life as briefly sketched by the daily press. Born in Edinburgh, though with a dash of impetuous Celtic blood in his veins, and educated in its academies, he was surrounded from childhood with influences and favored with privileges, well calculated to develop a naturally strong and vigorous mind. But though intended for professional life, he chose, instead of entering the University, the wider arena of the world, where until the day of his death, he manfully struggled and overcame obstacles that would have crushed and conquered feebler souls. In early manhood, as well as in maturer age, we find the same hopeful, buoyant, indomitable spirit, that knew nothing of defeat. Whether battling successfully against family reverses, or vindicating the liberty of the press against the threats of tyrants, and in spite of suits at law; or denouncing with fierce invective dishonesty and double-dealing in men occupying high places in the land; or vindicating the honor of his adopted country from the insults and false accusations of foreign nations:—in every condition he was the same courageous and intrepid spirit that counted not the cost, that the desired end might eventually be gained. His motto was :

Dare to be right ! Dare to be true !
All the world's scorning can never harm you,
Stand by your conscience, your honor, your faith,
Stand like a hero, and battle till death.

He was possessed of indomitable perseverance. This was manifested in every action and enterprise of his life. He may not

have had genius, in the technical meaning of the word, but he had what is far better for all practical purposes, untiring and continuous application to the business in hand. Indeed, we may say that he possessed talent and genius combined. Genius, as commonly defined, has no doubts—leaps to conclusions, and acts by inspiration and impulse, while talent reasons and plods. Both are necessary, we apprehend, and are generally found in the nature and achievements of truly great men. Placed as Mr. Brown was in early life, genius without singular force of character and tenacity of purpose could accomplish nothing. He never waited, as some dreamy, sentimental visionaries do, upon what they blasphemously call the leadings of Providence, or in modern phraseology, “for something to turn up.” But he girded himself manfully to the labor of life, and took advantage of everything that seemed likely to secure his advancement in the world, and enable him to reach an honorable independence. He firmly believed that the great Creator intended man to eat his bread by the sweat of his brow, and to exercise the talents entrusted him with diligence and earnestness, whether in the workshop or the senate chamber. Bayard Taylor, in some respects a man of kindred spirit, once said: “I have always reverently accepted, first—Labor. Nothing can be had for nothing. Whatever a man achieves, he must pay for it, and no favor of fortune can absolve him from duty. Second, Patience and forbearance, which are simply dependent on the slow justice of time. Thirdly—and most important, faith. Unless a man believes in something infinitely purer and grander than he can ever become—unless he has an instinct of an order beyond his dreams, of laws beyond his comprehension, of beauty and good and justice, beside which his own ideals are dark, he will fail in every loftier form of ambition, and ought to fail.” This was Mr. Brown’s creed, and how nobly he practiced it, his life declares!

Having gained a commanding position in society, and become a recognized power in moulding the opinions and directing the judgments and convictions of his fellow-men, his every word and tone were marked by intense earnestness, the sincerity of a man who believed, rightly or wrongly, in what he uttered. He did not assume the *role* of sentimental humanitarianism, adapting his principles and ideas to the prevailing temper of the age in which he lived. Had he done so, he might possibly have become a more popular statesman with a certain class, and secured for himself even higher honors than were accorded him in life. We have no reason to doubt, as he stated to Dr. Gregg, who had been his pastor for many years, that in deciding whether he would give or withhold his support from public measures, he asked first, Is it right? Second, Is it for the good of the country? And third, Will it benefit the party? Or, in other words, principle first; patriotism, second; and party last. That he often seemed impractical, unyielding, dogmatic, and imperious in his attitude, even to his best friends, arose from his strong decided convictions of duty. He was tenacious of his opinions, and seldom changed—and indeed the history of Canadian politics shows that he was seldom wrong. His views on public questions—once deemed extreme and violent—are now being slowly adopted by men, who derided them when first enunciated. Having patiently and conscientiously studied the great social and economic questions which effect the welfare and stability of nations, he arrived at conclusions which seemed to him as clear as the demonstrations of Euclid. Opponents might scoff, and friends might advise, but in vain. His attitude and response to political antagonists, as well as allies, was that of Fitzjames in the “Lady of the Lake :”

His back against a rock he bore,
And firmly placed his foot before :
Come one, come all, this rock shall fly
From its firm base, as soon as I.

As a natural result of strong convictions there was a downright plainness of speech, not always acceptable either to friends or to foes. When he struck it was with the clenched hand, and with terrible effect. His denunciation was unsparing, and continued if necessary for months, without one grain of pity for his victim. He possessed that severe cast of mind, that cannot easily take into account the manifold imperfections of public men, and make allowance for their frailty, when placed amid temptations. And yet no one for a moment questioned his thorough sincerity. His attacks were open and straightforward, he never stabbed in the dark, or covertly sought the overthrow of an enemy. As has been remarked by one who knew him well ; he was an honest opponent, who might sometimes use a bludgeon, instead of the orthodox rapier, but who never resorted to the stiletto, and never even in moments of the greatest excitement hit below the belt.

Such a man of necessity made enemies. His positive opinions and assertions seemed strange and fanatical to men whose principles were held for the sake of office and emolument, and who were ready to barter them at any moment for personal ends. Nor did he chafe under misrepresentation, and satire, and obloquy. He fully expected such treatment, and regarded censure and abuse as the natural consequence of the line of conduct he had adopted. For as the poet says :

He who surpasses or subdues mankind,
Must look down on the hate of them below ;
Though high above, the sun of glory glows.
Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow
Contending tempests on the naked head,
And thus reward the toils which to those summits led.

With all his alleged imperiousness and dogmatism, he was emphatically the tribune of the common people, and no name throughout the length and breadth of Canada was held in higher esteem than that of George Brown.

One blast upon his bugle horn
Was worth a thousand men.

His political struggles were all on behalf of the masses, as against aristocratic domination, and that haughty disdain, which is too often found associated with men who have sprung by accident from poverty to place and power. The measures he inaugurated or promoted, by voice and pen, were all intended to conserve the rights of citizenship, and to give the humblest son of toil a part in the government of the country. Such questions as the "Clergy Reserves," "Seignorial Tenure," "Representation by Population," and the "Confederation of the British Provinces," in all of which he occupied a prominent place, were urged from motives of the highest patriotism. He loved his adopted country with singular attachment and upheld its institutions with a fervor which has never been excelled; while at the same time he was a staunch defender of British rule. Some of you may remember the thrilling peroration of his great parliamentary speech on Confederation, in which he drew a glowing picture of the vastness of territory that would then be included in the Dominion by the contemplated accessions to British territory. Addressing the Speaker of the House of Commons, he said: "Look, sir, at the map of the continent of America, and mark that island (Newfoundland) commanding the mouth of the noble river that almost cuts the continent in twain. Well, sir, that island is equal in extent to the kingdom of Portugal. Cross the straits of the main land, and you touch the hospitable shores of Nova Scotia, a country as large as the kingdom of Greece. Then mark the sister province of New Brunswick, equal in extent to Denmark and Switzerland combined. Pass up the river St. Lawrence to Lower Canada, a country as large as France. Pass on to Upper Canada, a country twenty thousand square miles larger than Great Britain and Ireland put together. Cross over the continent, to the shores of the Pacific,

and you are in British Columbia, the land of golden promise, equal in extent to the Austrian Empire. I speak not now of the vast Indian territories that lie between—greater in extent than the whole soil of Russia, and that will ere long, I trust, be opened up to civilization under the auspices of the British American Confederation. Well, sir, the bold scheme in your hands, is nothing less than to gather all those countries into one, to organize them all under one government, with the protection of the British flag." If to-day we stand in the presence of that great fact of British American Union, which its most enthusiastic promoters scarcely hoped for for many years, the praise is largely due to George Brown, who along with other eminent statesmen, sunk their political differences to gain this most desirable end.

It is hardly necessary to say that he was one of the most pronounced and bitter enemies of slavery, in any and every form, that the age has produced. He was a disciple of Wilberforce and Buxton, and in thorough sympathy on this question with such American statesmen and philanthropists as Phillips, and Sumner, and Garrison. Indeed, I can hardly conceive of any man born in the metropolis of Scotland, and conversant with the terrible persecutions and martyrdoms of the prelatic age, to be anything else. I can imagine the great statesman and journalist in boyhood, standing on the old castle rock of Edinburgh, or on the Calton Hill, and looking down upon spots made memorable in all times coming, by the death of men who gladly shed their life's blood to conserve the rights of conscience and the cause of freedom. Yonder stands old Holyrood, where Queen Mary encountered John Knox, whom the beautiful Queen could never bend to her will by fascinations of person or speech.—of whom Morton said over his grave, that "he never feared the face of man," and who said of himself, when asked if he was not afraid to speak so boldly to his Queen, "Why should the fair face of a gentlewoman frighten me? I have looked in the

face of many angry men, and have not been afraid above measure." And there stands the house where the great Reformer died, and yonder is Parliament square where he lies buried. Yonder is Saint Giles, where Jenny Geddes' stool was sent flying at the Bishop's head—the first blow struck in that battle which ended in the Reformation and the banishment of the Stuart dynasty from the realm,—and near to this spot is the Grassmarket, where the martyrs suffered, and Greyfriars churchyard, where the solemn league and covenant was sealed and signed in blood, and where the dust of nobles and commoners lie side by side. With such surroundings in boyhood, we can easily understand how the great Canadian statesman could never become the apologist of slavery in any form. Possibly his pen seemed too trenchant in his attacks against slave-holders, even to men who held his views, but with his winning love of liberty, and his detestation of all forms of human vassalage and oppression, it could not be otherwise. The eloquent speech he made in Toronto on the subject of the American war and slavery, immediately after the proclamation of freedom, attracted the attention of both British and American statesmen. England—aristocratic England, and not the masses, while holding perfect neutrality between the North and South—was suspected of a secret desire to see the Union shattered, and said little, and did less, to show her sympathy with the North in that awful war. When Lincoln issued his proclamation as a war measure, Englishmen replied, that it was not for love to the slave that freedom had been proclaimed, and that the North deserved no credit for the act. Replying to such criticism, Mr. Brown said: "I care not to pry narrowly into the motives of all those who have contributed to bring about this change in the Republic. I care not to discuss the arguments by which it has been promoted and defended. What to us signifies all this? We see before us the great fact, that the chains have already fallen from the hands of tens of thousands of human chaf-

tels ; we see that if the policy of the present Government at Washington prevails, the curse of human slavery will be swept from our continent forever, and our hearts go up with earnest petitions to the God of battles, that he will strengthen the hands of Abraham Lincoln, and give wisdom to his councils. For myself, whatever may be the result of the present strife, I shall always feel the highest satisfaction in recollecting, that with the sin of sympathizing with slavery my hands are not defiled ; but that from the commencement of the struggle my earnest aspirations have gone with the friends of freedom !"

But we pay our humble tribute to the memory of the fallen chief, not simply because of his mental endowments, and unwearied industry, and patriotic deeds, and love of liberty, but because coupled with all these, and adorning all, he was a christian man. Judged by those who knew him best, his virtue was spotless, and his integrity incorruptible. He was a firm believer in the fundamental truths of our holy religion, and not ashamed to avow his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only ground of acceptance in the sight of God. He was emphatically a christian statesman, a name which I regret to say is nowadays held up to scorn, as a thing impossible in political life. It is said by men who ought to know better, that whatever be the failings of our politicians, we have no right to refer to their private life, and that it indicates lack of charity, and base ingratitude, to enquire too minutely into their conduct. Such a principle, if acted upon, would sap the very foundations of morals, and exalt villainy to the highest heaven. If it is right to expect that the magistrate or the judge shall be men of unimpeachable virtues, is it not equally necessary that those who rule the nation, and occupy commanding positions of trust and responsibility, shall in private life command the respect of those by whose suffrages they have been elected. Public men represent the interest of society, as well as principles and policies, and in accept-

ing such prominent positions, they must expect to bear such close inquisition as the life and health of the nation, and the community demand.

It is unnecessary to say in the hearing of this congregation that Mr. Brown was a regular attender of God's house, and valued highly religious ordinances. During his frequent visits to Brantford, I had many conversations with him on the uncertainty of life and the vanity of all earthly glory. Only those, indeed, who had such opportunities, knew anything of the tender heart that was concealed under a somewhat abrupt and rugged exterior. Some eight years ago we met at Hamilton, on his way to Bow Park. He had just been speaking to one of our prominent men, who was considerably advanced in years beyond Mr. Brown. "I have just been speaking, he said, to Mr. —, and remarking that both of us ought to think more seriously of the end of life, but he laughed at me, and said that he did not wish to think of death for twenty years. For my part, I feel that I am drawing near my end, nor indeed do I regret it, for if all is well, death is a grateful release to a busy life." On a Sabbath afternoon we were walking over the fields at Bow Park at the close of the service. A prominent politician had died the day before, and our conversation turned upon his life. "I sat down yesterday," he said, "and wrote out a sketch of his life and character, but as I proceeded I felt I knew too much about him to write the truth, without wounding the feelings of his friends, so I destroyed what I had written and committed the task to other hands." If he could not honestly eulogize, he would not unnecessarily pain. From all that I knew of him, I can verify what was said over his coffin, that "he entertained a high reverence for everything good and holy; that he walked under the power of unseen realities; that his anchor was cast within the veil, and that in the intense suffering of his last days, he rested upon Christ as his bright hope of that eternal

kingdom, into which, we trust, he has entered." To the friends and family of the departed, and to her who now mourns the death of a beloved husband, the knowledge, that by his countrymen, and far beyond the limits of this land, he is sadly missed, must be a source of consolation, but better far is the assurance that he died as a christian man can die, having, by anticipation, vanquished death and the grave through the merits of his ascended Lord. Such a memory is better than untold wealth. A good name is the best of all bequests, for a man is measured, not by what he has, but by what he is.

He has passed away, and it is only now the country begins to realize her loss.

It is not the tear, at this moment shed,
When the cold turf has now been laid o'er him,
That can tell how beloved was he that is fled,
Or how deep in our hearts we deplore him.

Death, removing him from the outward eye, enables us to see him inwardly and truly. Thus have we looked at a mountain and only seen the creeping mists and clouds which concealed it. But the wind moves the air, and the vapors suddenly disperse, and the pure snow summits, come out in bold outline against the blue sky. Death does the office of the wind. Passion and party strife at an end, we see the man in his true proportions. Those who were his most violent opponents cast the first garlands upon his tomb. When God places his seal upon a man, although he may be slandered and denounced for years, in the end he shines forth bright and beautiful. He may go under the waves for a time, but at last rises to the surface, stronger and purer, from the very combat he has had with them.

Who shall fill his place? upon whom shall the chieftain's mantle descend? Let those of his own personal friends, who perchance have fretted under his supremacy, answer the question. As for the

future of Canada—for the death of such a man, must of necessity affect its policy, if not its destinies—let us be assured, that he who raised up the departed statesman to do such noble work, can furnish others to perpetuate his unselfish efforts. The lesson of his life is, that there is no royal road to greatness. To every young man there is given opportunity to make his mark in the world, and die regretted. As I stood last Wednesday gazing on that vast funeral cortege that had gathered from every part of the land to honor the memory of the dead senator, I felt that true moral worth and unselfish labor will not be forgotten. Ungrateful as both monarchies and republics sometimes are, good men do not pass away forgotten. They live in the affection of their fellowmen, and their graves are watered with their tears. George Brown well deserves a statue, but bronze or marble can but faintly symbolize or perpetuate the widespread sorrow that fills the land. His name will be handed down from sire to son as one who is worthy of imperishable honor ; as one :

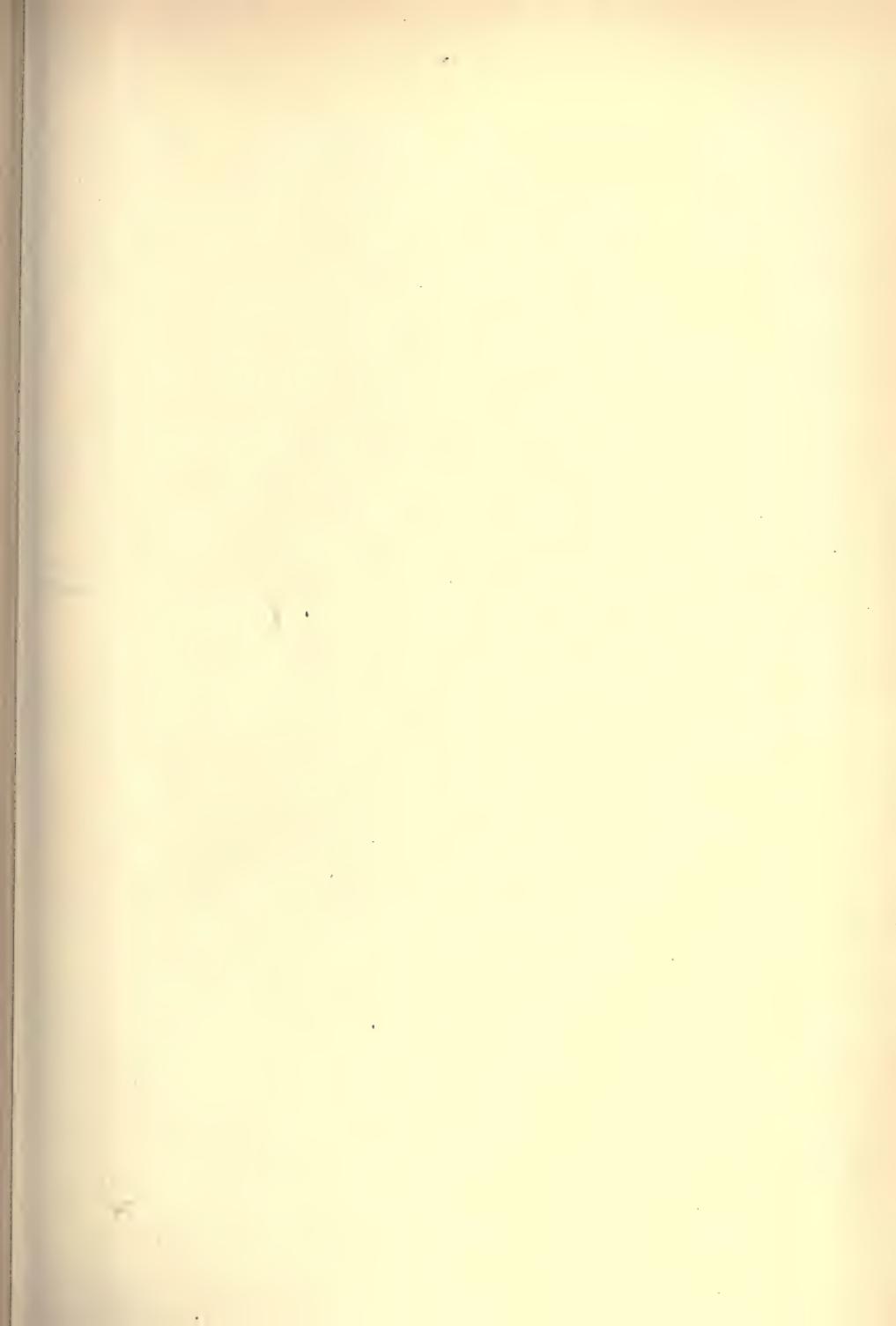
—Who never brought
His conscience to the public mart,
But lived himself the truth he taught,
White souled, clean handed, pure of heart.

He went about his work—such work as few
Ever had laid on head, and heart, and hand—
As one who knows, where there's task to do,
Man's honest will must heaven's good grace command.

And now the martyr's crown has crowned a life,
With much to praise—little to be forgiven.
The old world and the new, from sea to sea,

Utter one voice of sympathy and shame !
Strong heart, so stopped, when its throbs beat high,
Brave life cut short, just as its triumph came.







ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Abraham Lincoln.

“ Help Lord : for the godly man ceaseth : for the faithful fail from
among the children of men.”

—Psalm 12, v. 1.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

HE righteous perish, and no man layeth it to heart ; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. Such was the lamentation of Isaiah, when many pious Jews suffered a violent death, and the great mass of the nation seemed quite unconcerned and indifferent.

It seems strange in so many cases that God should call to Himself His most efficient agents in the world before their work seems to be accomplished. "One soweth and another reapeth," is an almost universal law in christian enterprise. Just at the very moment when success seems to reward previous toil, and enjoyment to follow labor, does the active brain cease to plan, the busy hand to execute, and the throbbing heart to beat. God's ways are mysterious and past finding out. "Help Lord, for the godly man faileth," we exclaim, while standard-bearer after standard-bearer falls upon the battle-field ; christian hearts despond, and the hosts of hell press on to what seems certain victory !

We mistake, however, in saying that God's servants are ever taken before their work is finished. In no case is it so. We, who only see but a small portion of God's providential designs, think so. The removal of useful, earnest, intelligent men from the church and the world seems to be disastrous, unwise, and fatal to the great interests in which they are engaged; whereas, such an event may be the starting point of new life and vigor to the cause in question. The very name and memory of such men may act as a power upon those who are left behind, inspiring them with new zeal and enthusiasm in the object to which their lives were devoted. Nor must we forget that man's immortal powers have another field for their exercise, than this disjointed rudimentary state of being. The world is at best but a training school for higher efforts, and the ablest intellects and ripest scholars are the first removed.

We cannot point out any religious or moral enterprise that ever permanently suffered by the removal of human agents. Others are invariably raised up sooner or later to occupy the place of those who fall, and carry forward the work beyond the point aimed at by their predecessors. The leaves of autumn that soon will cover the ground and be trodden under foot, but give place to others that shall adorn the trees in coming spring. They filled up their appointed time of life in the vegetable world, and now according to the fixed laws of nature drop off from the naked branches. So it is with man, in the more extensive field of human activity. One generation cometh and another goeth, but the vast and intricate purposes of Almighty Wisdom continue to be advanced and perfected.

But should no workers rise up to take the place of those who fall, is the Almighty dependent upon the aid of mortals? Does infinite power and wisdom need the co-operation of feeble men? Is the hand that spanned the firmament, and set the sun in mid-heavens, and gave bounds to the ocean which it cannot pass,

become so powerless, that the care of the universe is a burden and the upholding of created things a weariness? Has that infinite intellect that at first planned the order of the universe and through countless centuries of duration has continued to direct and superintend the affairs of men become so weak and foolish as no longer to be able to direct and guide, and to be altogether dependent upon the counsel and wisdom of fallible and short-sighted men? No; far from it. Did no human beings exist, were He left alone, as in a past eternity, without angels to adore or creatures to praise, His plans and purposes would be as certain of fulfilment, as if surrounded by the hosts of heaven, and myriads of the redeemed in heaven and saints on earth to execute His commands.

Old Lyman Beecher was a man not usually given to despondency; but at times he almost lost his faith in God. When Dr. Cornelius, Secretary of the American Board of Foreign Missions died, one of his sons tells us he had a very dark day. "I cannot understand," he said, "what the Lord means when His work needs just such a man as Cornelius, and He takes him away in the prime of life, at a time when he is carrying on the work successfully, and there is nobody to take his place." But there was somebody ready. Dr. Wisner took it, but he only carried it on a few years, and died also. "I well remember," says his son, "the morning when father was preparing the sermon to preach over Dr. Wisner. The wheels dragged heavily. He was very much cast down. Though I was quite young, he said to me: 'Henry, it is all done! It is all done! I cannot see what the Lord means. He is making breach after breach. There is so much to do, and so few to do it! He is taking the best of them!'" And so perhaps we have all felt, when year after year God smites the tall cedars of Lebanon, and shatters the pillars of the church and the state. Yet in spite of these removals, the world goes on, and the cause of truth advances to completion.

David, in our text, regards the withdrawal of good men from the world as a public calamity, which should be felt more or less by all who share their friendship. The example of such men; their lives and prayers and active labors for the good of humanity are no ordinary blessings. When these end, the commonwealth suffers a heavy loss. It indicates a low state of piety and patriotism, when the community or nation fail to mark such bereavements, or, as when is not unfrequently the case, the departure of the righteous is an occasion for joy. All good men feel how becoming are the words of the Psalmist: "Help Lord: for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail among the children of men."

Such good and godly men are comparatively few; while good sort of men are plentiful. The world acknowledges the fact in the kind of encomiums it passes upon its friends. For once that you hear a man spoken of without qualification as a good man, you hear the expression, "a good sort of man," a thousand times. "He had his faults, to be sure," say the companions of such a man after his death, "but on the whole was rather a good sort of man—a generous fellow: he had a warm heart and a sociable disposition. He was not a bad sort of fellow, after all."

When we come to examine the record which these "good sort of men" leave behind, we find it in many cases the reverse of what is honorable and virtuous. The language is used indiscriminately towards the most indifferent and unworthy characters. Men who have no decided principles—who follow the customs of the majority—who are timid and craven-hearted in the presence of evil, if not positive evil-doers themselves;—who have no determination to resist temptation, and who float with the current of the age;—these, in most cases, are what the world calls "good sort of men." It has thus become a stereotyped phrase, to conceal defects and positive wrong-doing, which the grave cannot entirely blot out of memory.

"Good sort of men" have no positive virtues. Their character is a bundle of negatives. Where positive immorality cannot be charged against them, they are useless for all active labor on behalf of God and humanity. They are so much dead weight upon the body politic. Their influence for good is of the lowest grade. What talents they possess lie unexercised. They dream existence away, regardless of individual responsibility, and imagine that "good intentions" and "doing no harm to others" entitle them to sainthood. It is not of such that the Psalmist speaks.

A good man, in the highest sense, is a man of the strictest integrity. His word is as good as his oath; his promise as reliable as his bond. He can be trusted with the gravest responsibilities. His dealings are marked by straightforwardness and honesty. He is the very soul of honor. Meanness of every description he despises. He cannot stoop to fraud in speech or action. He takes no undue advantage of the ignorance and misfortunes of another. He speaks what he thinks, and is the same to a man's face that he is behind his back. The secrets of others, committed to him, are inviolate. If he finds occasion to rebuke a friend, it is given with candor, openly and frankly. His duties to society he regards as next in importance to those that are due his Maker. He eats honest bread. What he owes he pays. The obligations he is under to his native or adopted country he cheerfully discharges. As a citizen, recognizing his responsibilities as well as his rights, he bears his share of civil burdens, and obeys the call of authority at whatever personal sacrifice. Such a man comes up to the poet's conception of true moral heroism :

Dare to be right! dare to be true!
All the world's scorning can never harm you;
Stand by your conscience, your honor, your faith,
Stand like a hero and battle till death.

A good man is also a man of the severest virtue. He loathes that laxity in speech and behaviour too prevalent among so-called

respectable men at the present day. He is pure in thought and chaste in conversation. He takes his stand upon the morality of the New Testament, and endeavors to inculcate it upon the members of his own family—in the circle of his acquaintances, and among his fellow-workmen. Foolish jesting, unseemly insinuations and covert inuendoes he loathes and spurns with holy indignation. In the society of the profane and irreverent he cannot live ; if he cannot change its tone, he must withdraw.

Such a good man is still further characterized by the strongest benevolence. There is something in his very voice and countenance that tells the generosity of his nature. He strives to live for the good of others. He is not simply a man who harms no one, but he seeks the positive good of his fellow-men. His ear is ever open to the call of the destitute, and his hand ever ready to give for their relief. To see the prosperity of others is his delight. Envy and hatred have no place in his nature. To strengthen the weak, advise the young, reclaim the fallen, restore the backslider, and bless all men, are the motives that govern his life. Such benevolence is a daily practice. It is not abnormal or spasmodic, or called into activity on extraordinary occasions, but sweetly colors and perfumes every action of his life.

A good man also, is in the highest sense a man of sincerest piety. It is deep, earnest, heartfelt. It consists not only in the acceptance of doctrines, but in the practice of holiness. An abiding sense of God's presence ; a reverential regard for His commands ; a confident trust in His promises ; and implicit reliance upon His mercy, characterize such a man. Such piety may be more or less prominent, according to gifts bestowed and opportunities given. In many cases it is retiring ; but even then it yields a mighty influence for good. In every case it is pronounced and patent to the world. It makes no secret of the choice that has been made and the master whom it serves.

It is supposed that this Psalm was written when Saul was persecuting David and those who were friendly to his cause and person. It was a time when deceitfulness and cruelty were in the ascendancy, and no means honorable or dishonorable regarded as immoral, in order that certain ends might be secured. Flattery, double-dealing and oppression were rampant—the wicked and the vile were exalted to high position, and the godly despised and trampled on.

The persons spoken of are the “godly” and the “faithful.” The one term indicates the inner spiritual life—the other its outward manifestation or effects. Religion in the heart is the source of all real purity and honor, and is the only guarantee for honesty and justice in society. Men who have no fear of God and no love of truth ; who think it but a venial sin to violate the sanctions of heaven, can have no scruples about human law. When once a man ignores the claims of his Maker, and becomes careless in the observance of religious obligations, there is nothing to prevent the commission of flagrant crimes. The word of a man who sincerely professes his faith in Christianity, and consistently acts up to the requirements of his creed, is better than the oath of a man who neither recognizes nor reverences the Divine being. The feeling that every action and thought is open to the inspection of the Almighty, is the best of safeguards against the practice of dishonesty in word or deed. When such godly men are plentiful, the nation prospers commercially, politically and religiously, but when they are few, and the influence of the few is overborne by the vicious and depraved, the downfall of the state is certain.

The death of such good men, although most keenly felt by kindred spirits, is not always passed over with indifference, even by men of no religious principle. “Let me die the death of the righteous,” is frequently found upon the lips of evildoers, when some tall cedar of Lebanon bends before the blast. Although the

upright life of such a man may have been for years a standing rebuke against their immorality and wickedness, they cannot but testify to the consistent and noble career prematurely closed. And thus it is, that religion extorts from its enemies the highest praise ;—that men are bound to honor qualities in others which they systematically and wilfully ignore, and pass sentence of condemnation upon their own wanton and wicked lives.

Let us briefly indicate the value of such good men to society and the church of God.

Godly and faithful men are the ornaments and support of the christian church. Their life is spent in her service. Their prayers ascend for her welfare. Their means are generously devoted to her advancement. The great aim of their existence is the prosperity of Zion and the conversion of the world. The loss of such men cannot but be felt, just in proportion to their zeal and the prominence of their labors. If, as is often the case, they have been watchmen upon the high towers, men whose daily occupation has been the sacred duties of religion, and who have planned and directed measures necessary for successful aggression in the world, the blank seems all the more painful and the cause all the more hopeless. The rank and file of the army look around for the well-known voice of the commander, who has so often led them on to victory, and are for the time panic-struck and crest-fallen. Such men are also the hope of the world. They adorn whatever profession of life they follow. If science, they stand at the top of the ladder, reverently endeavoring to unfold the mysteries of nature to the wondering gaze of thousands less gifted ; to reconcile the teachings of philosophy with the declarations of scripture, and glorify the power and wisdom of the Creator, who has so lavishly spread before man the variegated and suggestive volume of His handiwork. If it is true that “the undevout astronomer is mad,” it is no less true that the philosopher who affects to teach any

branch of science apart from the great Creator, mistakes the end of all investigation. Such men there have been, and still are, but benefactors of their race they cannot be regarded as being. To dissever God from the universe, and teach that matter is eternal, and subject to no higher law, is surely a miserable calling for any man, however gifted in intellect, or shrewd in speculation. While a passing feeling of regret may be expended on such men when they pass away, it is rather for genius misdirected and misapplied, than for the loss the world sustains. Those men who endeavor to unfold to the common gaze the majesty of Jehovah, as seen in the magnificence and variety of creation, are the men whose names posterity will not willingly let die.

Godly and faithful men are the hope of the world. They adorn whatever department or profession of life they occupy. Their integrity is incorruptible—their honesty above impeachment—their honor untarnished. In times of public distrust and agitation and uncertainty, when men's minds are distracted by conflicting opinions, and the foundations of rectitude are undermined, such characters are invaluable. Men whose daily policy is expediency; who trim and vacillate to meet the demands of popular clamour; whose idea of office is emolument and place and power, are not to be relied upon. In times of danger, a steady recognition of a higher tribunal than that of men; moral worth and inflexible principle united to intellectual power, are the elements which constitute good citizens and good statesmen. Blessed is the nation that enjoys such rulers; blessed is the community that possesses such sterling men of worth, at whose death the words of the text are spoken: "Help Lord, for the godly man ceaseth: for the faithful fail among the children of men."

There is still another reason why the death of such good men is lamented. Those of us who remain feel our personal need of such characters. There are persons whose society breathes per-

petual fragrance; whose words drop like balm; whose gentle demeanor and spiritual conversation, raises us above the grovelling atmosphere of earth, and makes us feel nearer heaven. Their life is a perpetual inspiration. Their piety is of that cheerful healthy kind, that drives away despondency, and confirms weak faith. Such characters are to be found more or less in every church. We do not value such persons when alive as they deserve, or prize their unobtrusive graces and moral worth; and hence our bitterness when they are removed. We feel that the world has suddenly grown darker—that the path is more desolate and stormy—that our hopes are less bright and assuring, now that they no longer greet us with their smile and enliven us by their stimulating fellowship.

What, then, is our comfort, when the godly man ceaseth and the faithful are taken away? David in the text indicates the only source of aid, "Help Lord." "God is our refuge and our strength, a very present help in trouble."

Now in regard to this prayer, notice first, its brevity. It is a kind of angel's word, to be turned every way, and to be used on all occasions. The cry for help is the earliest cry upon the lips of childhood, when seeking protection from the parent, and it is the most simple and natural cry of the believing soul. It indicates felt weakness; that so far as man is concerned, there is no remedy and no assistance possible; and that reason of herself can suggest no way of escape from impending desolation. "Help Lord," says a living writer, "is a very useful ejaculation, which one may dart up to heaven on occasions of emergency, whether in labor, learning, suffering, fighting, living or dying. As small ships can sail into harbors where larger vessels cannot enter, so our brief cries and short petitions may trade with heaven, when our soul is wind bound as to longer exercises of devotion, and when the stream of grace seems at too low aebb to float a more laborious supplication." In going to our Maker in times of sudden grief, we need not des-

cribe every feeling of the soul, nor enter into the particulars of our sorrow. "Help Lord" is sufficient. It is the cry of the drowning man, exhausted, and hardly able to articulate; it is the cry of the fugitive who seeks a hiding place; it is the cry of the man surrounded by the flames of fire—his head already singed and his body livid with the scorching heat; it is the cry of despairing humanity in its varied hours of want and weariness—"I am undone, oppressed, undertake for me."

Notice, again, its seasonableness and serviceableness. When good men are removed, we are to look to God for others to supply their place. Prayer in such cases, to be acceptable, must be immediate. We ought at once to betake ourselves to a throne of grace, laying the case before our Maker and confiding in his gracious aid. It is not when all other means have failed, that we are to ask the aid of heaven. Such prayers are not seasonable. To act thus, is like a man buffeting for hours with the angry billows, when the life-boat has all the while been near him, and only taking refuge in its strength and buoyancy, when at the point of death.

Such a prayer is also serviceable. In many periods of the church's history, such a brief ejaculation has been more effectual than the collective wisdom of an assembly. The defeat of the Amalekites was due to the intercession of Moses, more than the military strength of the Israelites or the skill of their commanders. And no better service can be rendered the church than earnest importunate cries for divine interposition in times of bereavement. Those who have not the capacity or strength for active labor, can accomplish in the secret retirement of the closet more than many who participate in the contest. To such pleading praying ones we are indebted for gracious seasons of revival in times of spiritual deadness, and large accessions of laborers to reap the fields that are white unto the harvest.

Finally, this prayer is the prayer of faith. Our cries are only effectual in so far as they are sincere. True faith does not dictate—it waits patiently and submissively on the will of heaven. It looks beyond human wisdom, to Him who knows what agents are most suitable, and when and where their services are most urgently required. It holds the promise fast, that God will provide the instruments necessary to fulfil his plans, and that failure cannot possibly overtake his designs. It is wrong for us to despond because good and faithful men are translated to a higher sphere. Our duty is to cultivate hope and maintain our confidence in a prayer-hearing God. The cause which is dear to us, is still dearer to him. His son gave his life for the salvation of men, and the agents necessary to hasten on the millennial day glory shall not be withheld. If Moses dies before the Israelites cross the Jordan, Joshua is ready to take his place. If Elijah ascends in the chariot of fire, the mantle falls upon Elisha. So it has been in every age. Our prayers may not be instantly answered. Help may not at once be given; nay, the vacant place may be left unoccupied, and the work advanced by altogether unexpected methods, but the result will be the same :

In some way or other, the Lord will provide :

It may not be my way,
It may not be thy way,
And yet in his own way
The Lord will provide.

Despond, then, no longer, the Lord will provide :

And this be the token—
No word he hath spoken
Was ever yet broken ;
The Lord will provide.

The frequent removals of great and good men teach us the comparative insignificance of any one man in the field of christian effort. We may not boast of our wisdom or importance in the

scale of being. How little can any one individual accomplish ! When we survey the work that awaits completion—the vast details of human ignorance and suffering that stretches out on every hand—the feeling of utter helplessness, rather than self-sufficiency, should be uppermost in the mind. We can do so little that at times it seems as if it were no use to put forth effort ; and were it not for the assurance that along with us myriads of workers are engaged in the same sublime and noble work, and that God Himself stands behind and above us, superintending, directing and crowning all with His blessed spirit, we should despair of anything like adequate results. They teach us also, that in the successful advancement of christian enterprises and in the reforming of public wrongs, the efforts of the many are demanded, and not the extraordinary energies of the few. In such circumstances, it becomes us not only to cry : “Help Lord, for the godly man ceaseth,” but to ask ourselves what we are doing by our example and our efforts, to ameliorate human wretchedness and lessen human woe. “Be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.” “Remember them which have the rule over you, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and for ever.”

God give us men !
Men whom the lust of office cannot kill ;
Men whom the spoil of office cannot buy ;
Men who have opinions and a will ;
Men who have honor—men who will not lie !

A good and in many respects a great man has been suddenly called away. Abraham Lincoln, a name henceforth to be held in highest honor is no more.* It is only in the briefest possible terms that we can speak of the character and actions of the dead Presi-

*April, 1865.

dent. The more secret virtues and private graces of his character are apt to be overlooked, by reason of the exalted station he occupied :

That best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love.

It is not often, indeed, that we are called to mourn the loss of such a man, for only once in a century does Providence give to the world, one in whom so many public and private virtues are so harmoniously blended. As statesman, as citizen, and as christian, where since the days of Washington and the earlier years of the Republic, shall we find such a President? Firm in matters of principle—cautious (to a fault it has been thought) in his public actions, unflinching in his determination at all hazards to advance the cause of truth and liberty and good government—kind and conciliating on all occasions to foreign powers and their representatives—forgiving to those who for the last four years have deluged the land with blood—and pure and virtuous in his private life—his character stands out before us, a noble example for princes and presidents to copy. His public and private record, so pure and untarnished, may well be the boast of his loving countrymen, and his memory dear to liberty-loving christians throughout the world.

On such an occasion as the present we are brought to realize the power of a good man's life. "He being dead yet speaketh." His influence then really begins to influence the world, and mould the society in which he moved. Why is the lamentation to-day so universal, from Maine to California, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and through this and the neighboring British provinces? Why are there here gathered, not simply members of all the different evangelical denominations, but of every shade of politics? Because "a prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel." Greatness and goodness are not always associated in life—too seldom,

indeed, in public men. In Mr. Lincoln's case they were. He was great in the moral qualities, with which, by a kind Providence, he had been endowed. He was great for what he did in behalf of his nation. We do not eulogize him as a great politician in the now much degenerated meaning of the word. To be a politician at the present day demands neither moral calibre nor earnest thought. A man destitute of these and all the other requisites of true greatness, can speedily attain political distinction—nay, the absence of principle will be all the more in his favor, if worldly promotion is his sole object in life, provided he has cunning, deceit, and the more dishonorable and dishonest practices that stain the character of so many public men. In this sense Mr. Lincoln was not great. But he was one of the greatest statesmen of his age and country, and subsequent critics will confirm our verdict when the mists of passion and prejudice shall have cleared away. America, since the Revolution, has had many great and good men in her Cabinets and in her Presidential chair ; but Abraham Lincoln, next to Washington himself, was in many respects the greatest. His greatness did not consist in any one special faculty or power overtopping and overshadowing all the other elements of his mind and character, but in the blending of many amiable qualities into one, giving to his conduct a solidity and a harmony it would not otherwise have possessed. He was great for what he was in himself. As you have heard already, he was a man of prayer. His piety was of that modest and unobtrusive character that shrinks from public observation, but it could not be concealed. He was no stranger to his closet ; the dawn of morning, ere he entered upon his official duties, found him on his knees before his Maker, and doubtless his last act at the close of day was communion with his God. Not only so, but the most common affairs of state were permeated by the spirit of religion. "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," was the rule of his life. To this, what may be

called the fundamental quality of his life, may be added sterling honesty, great decision of character, strong affection for all good men, genuine patriotism in the interests of his beloved land, and sincere sympathy for the oppressed. All these elements were in his character, long before he was called to the Presidential chair, and because of the existence of such elements did his fellow-countrymen (directed by an all-wise Providence) choose him for the position he has for the past four years so singularly adorned.

Abraham Lincoln was indeed one of the nobles of the earth. Because of his greatness and goodness was he called to the great work of ruling thirty millions of his fellow-countrymen. He was raised up to perform a great work. Providence had determined the overthrow of slavery on the American continent, and Abraham Lincoln was the appointed instrument for its destruction. Great men are raised up and specially trained for great exigencies in society and in the church. Moses, to be the commander and leader of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage to freedom ; Calvin, Knox and Luther, to carry on the work of ecclesiastical reformation ; Washington, to achieve the independence of America, and plant on firm foundations the new Republic ; and Wellington, to drive back the great Napoleon from the conquest of the world. It was not the exalted position of Abraham Lincoln that made him the great man and the good man he was. Circumstances can do nothing more than develop true greatness, whether in prince or peasant. The sun and the rain from heaven cannot develop brambles into oak trees, nor can the honors of the Presidential chair transform fools into statesmen. Abraham Lincoln was by nature and grace an uncommon man, but his noble qualities were rendered all the more conspicuous and illustrious, when roused into action by the agitations amid which he spent the last four years of his earthly life.

Great in himself, he was great for what he did in behalf of his nation. He prepared the nation for its baptism of blood. His

speeches and addresses in various parts of the Union, long before the end of Buchanan's Presidency, did much to foster the anti-slavery sentiment of the North and prepare for days of coming trial. And what has he accomplished during the brief space of the last four years? The state of the nation when Abraham Lincoln was called in 1861, to assume the responsible duties of government was desperate. For years, the corruption that festered in and around Washington, had made the very name of American Democracy a standing reproach throughout Europe. Traitors were everywhere—in the cabinet, and out of the cabinet. To dethrone avarice—to cleanse the fountains of the national life—to elevate justice—honor—honesty and christian principle to their true position was a task seldom given to any man. In this respect, the work of Lincoln was greater than that of Washington. Washington laid the foundations of a new government—Lincoln had to destroy—cut up by the roots, that poisonous system that for years had undermined the social fabric, before the first elements of reconstruction could be initiated.

Chosen at the most critical period in her history since the Revolution to guide the national councils, how wisely and prudently did he discharge his solemn responsibilities until, at last, we see the omens of returning peace and prosperity in that sadly desolated land. He revived the purity of the Presidential Chair—abolished slavery—of which he was ever a consistent opponent. "I am naturally anti-slavery, he wrote a year ago to Mr. Hodges, of Kentucky. If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong. I cannot remember when I did not so think and feel." And amid all the anxieties consequent upon the last four years of bloody war, he not only preserved the integrity of the national life, but restrained the passions of more impetuous and impulsive politicians, who would gladly have added a foreign war to that of civil discord. For this of itself, Abraham Lincoln deserves the lasting gratitude of Britons as well

as American Christians. But now he is gone, and what are the lessons so impressively taught us by the sad event? His death should certainly unite Britons and Americans closer than ever in the bonds of fraternal love; the circumstances of that death, so atrocious and repulsive to the feelings of our common humanity, should teach us more plainly than ever what certain apologists of slavery are capable of. And if there are any who, notwithstanding the wonderful progress made by the North, are still dubious as to the issue of the contest, let them now understand that the death of Abraham Lincoln means universal freedom. There can be no doubt as to the issue. Slavery is at an end—the doctrine of States rights has been buried without any hope of resurrection. A real union will henceforth exist between the North and South, or rather I should say, there will henceforth be no such geographical or moral distinctions as North and South. The moral influence of the United States will be greater than ever over the globe, and her conquests in the field of christian civilization greater than they have ever been upon the battlefield. And may we not hope soon to see the day when Britain and America, forgetting all their criminations and recriminations, shall, as in days gone by, unite together for the spread of justice, liberty and christian missions throughout the world.

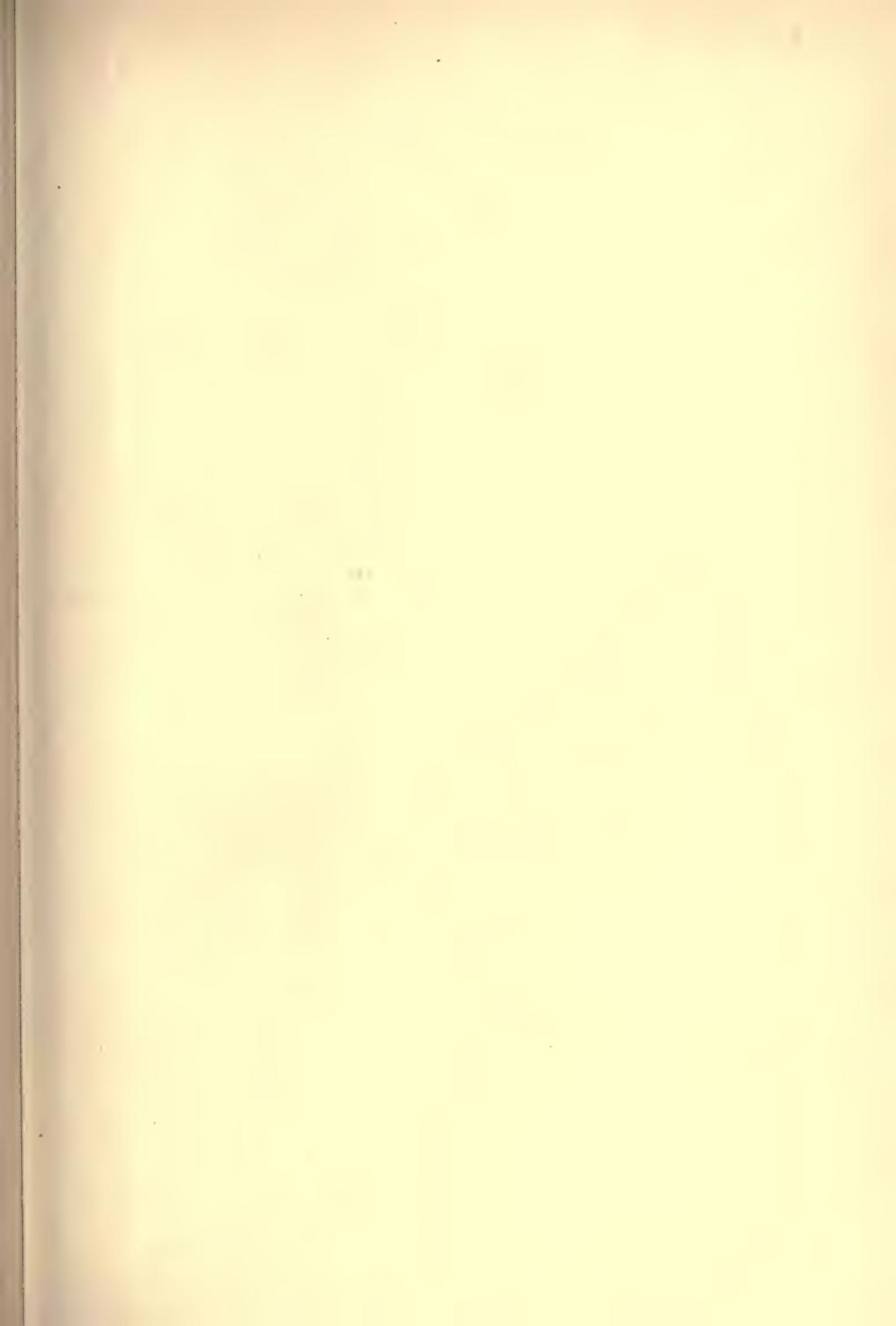
Abraham Lincoln has gone—but great men never die before their time. His is

One of the few—the immortal names
That were not born to die.

He is gone—not in the natural course of disease, but by the hands of the assassin. Four years of anxious care and ceaseless toil had furrowed his brow and mellowed his heart; but he was thus all the better fitted for the important work before him in the reconstruction of his bleeding country. “One soweth and another reap-

eth." He has sowed the seeds of liberty, but others in more peaceful times shall gather the fruit. "They never fail, who die in a good cause." Patriot Martyr! thy blood, so cruelly shed, has not been shed in vain. It will rouse into action the nobler impulses of his bereaved nation, and ring the death-knell of slavery throughout the world.







JAMES A. GARFIELD.

President Garfield.

“And Aaron held his peace.”

—Leviticus 10, v. 3.

PRESIDENT GARFIELD.

IN FORMER chapters, an account is given of the public consecration of Aaron and his sons to the priesthood. The ram of consecration having been slaughtered, Moses took the blood, and applying it to the ears, and hands, and feet of Aaron and his sons, set them apart for the service of the tabernacle. Following this solemn act, the congregation of Israel was summoned before the Lord, and the newly consecrated priests made atonement for themselves and for the people. The glory of the Lord then appeared, and the fire came down, consuming the burnt offering and the fat upon the altar, while the congregation shouted and fell upon their faces. Everything was now complete connected with the tabernacle service. The priests had been duly robed and mitred : the sacrifice offered and accepted : the priestly benedictions given to the people, and the visible manifestation of God's glory witnessed by the awe-struck congregation. Truly it was a sublime and memorable spectacle : a day long to be remembered in the history of Israel, and an earnest of still better days in store.

But the joy was not of long continuance. Scarcely had the shout of victory and gladness passed away, before the voice of wailing was heard in the camp of Israel. Nadab and Abihu had but entered on the priestly office, when in the act of offering strange fire before the Lord, they were swiftly deposed from their holy vocation. Scarcely had the fire from heaven consumed the offering upon the altar, when that same fire returned to execute summary vengeance upon two of those very men, who but a little while before had ministered in presence of the congregation. "Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them a censor, and put incense thereon, and put fire therein, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord!"

What was the sin of which they were guilty?

There was, first, a wilful disregard of God's command. They set up their own reason in opposition to the divine will. There was no room left for the introduction of anything of human origin, however expedient it might appear. Every part of the tabernacle service was most minutely detailed by God to Moses, and by Moses to the priests. Nor was there reasonable ground for doubt as to the meaning of the instructions given. What God had commanded, they were scrupulously to follow: what he had not commanded, they were to shun.

Secondly,—Not only did they burn incense without God's command, but they took common or "strange fire," with which to burn it. The fire from off the altar, kindled by the flame from heaven, was alone to be used for consuming sacrifices and burning incense. But instead of conforming to the divine instructions, they took fire used in preparing the flesh of the peace offerings. In their estimation, the one kind of fire was as good as the other. Thus to the sin of disobedience, they added insult.

Thirdly,—There are good grounds for believing that when they committed this act of disobedience, they were intoxicated with wine. In the eighth verse of this chapter God says to Aaron: "Do not drink wine, nor strong drink, thou nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die." Such a command, given immediately after this sad occurrence, leads us to infer that, forgetting the sanctity of their office and their persons, Nadab and Abihu became for the time the slaves of that vice, which from that hour to this has again and again dishonored the ministry, and blighted the most promising careers! How needful that God's servants, when appearing in the sanctuary, should in the quaint words of old George Herbert, pray "that nothing may befall them unworthy of that majesty before which they are to present themselves, and that how or whensoever he punish them, it may not be in the act of the ministry." To die at the altar or in the pulpit is not indeed a translation to be dreaded by the faithful minister; but to be smitten down by fire from heaven in the manifest exercise of judgment is a death beyond all others to be dreaded.

The fire did not burn them to ashes—nay, did not so much as singe their garments. Wrapped in their robes of office, sprinkled and anointed, there they lay, a fearful monument of God's anger. As the Levites carried their dead bodies through the streets of the camp, what a solemn lesson was taught the people of becoming reverence in the worship of God? God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of his saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him." When we pass within the veil and take our places as ministering priests in His sanctuary, our inmost thoughts are disclosed to that eye that penetrates the darkness and comprehendeth the utmost bounds of space. He takes in at a glance the hosts of heaven and the lost in hell.

And this brings me to speak more particularly of my theme—"The silence of grief." What were the feelings of the aged High Priest when he saw his two sons struck down by his side, we can but faintly conceive! What affliction comparable to his? But a little while before they stood at the altar clothed in their garments of glory and beauty ; they saw the beams of the Divine brightness darting from the shekinah, and heard the shout of adoring worshippers ; now they lay cold in the grasp of death! "Aaron felt that the very pillars of his house were shaken" by the thunders of divine judgment, but he kept silence. It was not the silence of stoical indifference, but of submission to the divine will. He acknowledged the justice of their doom, and bowed his head beneath the rod. And so we read : "Moses said unto Aaron, this is it that the Lord spake saying : 'I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified.' And Aaron held his peace."

"Great sorrows," says an old philosopher, "are silent—light sorrows speak." There are times when silence is more becoming and impressive than language : when we cannot speak. It was well for Aaron that he could thus restrain himself. Whatever were his feelings as a father, as God's representative he dare not give way to tears. Both he and his remaining sons are prohibited from exhibiting the usual tokens of grief. "Moses said unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar, and unto Ithamar, his sons : 'Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes, lest ye die, and lest wrath come upon all the people : but your brethren, the whole house of Israel, let them bewail the burning, which the Lord hath kindled.'" And so, under the shadow of this awful sorrow, Aaron performs his duties, as the consecrated priest of the Most High. It is his part not to weep nor mourn, but to worship and silently submit. What God hath done must be right, however painful for the human heart to bear.

In similar terms Ezekiel the prophet was commanded to abstain from mourning for his wife. "Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke ; yet, neither shalt thou mourn nor weep. neither shall thy tears run down. Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of man. So I spake unto the people in the morning, and at even my wife died, and I did in the morning as I was commanded." Very beautiful has a living poet described the feelings of Ezekiel, when submissively he yielded up his "only one to the will of heaven."

The clouds had parted now,
The love of God was shed abroad, within
My broken heart. I could not say Him nay,
Nor question Him. I laid my sacrifice
Upon His altar not denying Him
Mine only one.

I bent to kiss her cheek,
And blessed her softly in the name of God,
And bade her go in peace. Yea, with a smile
Which God had given me, I loosed my hold,
And suffered her to rise and go with Him.

This silence of grief, then, when the heart is so full that it almost breaks, is most impressive and significant. It tells that the bereaved heart has gained the victory over the human passions of the soul and bears resignedly the loss, and bows submissively to the wise though mysterious decree of heaven. "Rebellion speaks—resignation holds its peace."

We are not always, then, to measure the depth of inward feeling by the wailings of the chamber of death in the hour of bereavement. Nor are we to conclude that where there are no tears and no out-spoken words, there is but little heartfelt sorrow. Hearts are often so lacerated and bruised that they cannot find words to express the

acuteness of the pain endured. The agony of the soul so disarranges the entire system of nature that tears cannot flow. "Better, indeed, it is in such moments to retire within one's self, to collect our thoughts and meditate alone upon the heavy loss sustained, letting our tears fall back into the heart."

But in the case of Aaron, this silence was not only symbolical of unutterable grief, but it also indicated acquiescence in the bereavement. This is what few of us attain in the hour of trial. We are so stupified and stunned by the suddenness and apparent severity of the blow, that we can do nothing else than hold our peace, but not in the spirit of the Psalmist when he says: "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it." The Shunamitish woman, after the death of her son, when asked by Gehazi, the servant of the prophet: "Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with the child?" answered, "it is well." Madame Guyon, it is said, buried her children without shedding tears, because the God who had made them smile in infancy, made them smile more happily in another land. To her the day, cloudy and dark, or sunshine, was alike precious; winter's storm was as welcome as summer's calm. She lived not in the narrowness of self, but in the wider expanse of the Almighty. But it is not given to us all to concur in His will, who orders every event for the highest good. We fret and inveigh against the dealings of supreme wisdom, as if the Almighty were under obligations to disclose to us the reasons of his acts and the ultimate design of his sovereign will!

Need I say that such conduct implies distrust of God's goodness, and lack of faith in his wisdom. To acquiesce in his providential dealings, it is not necessary that we should understand at once the meaning of his chastisements:—why they are so sudden—to human judgment so perplexing, and in circumstances so distressing. That He has done it, should be enough to quell every

rising complaint, and hush to silence every murmur. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be his holy name."

Now there are just such periods when we are called upon to make proof of our submission, under severe calamities. "There are great tidal waves of sorrow, that sweep through the sea of life from time to time, and cover the soul with their dark impenetrable surge, and shut out the sunlight like a grave. They come without warning, and we cannot understand their cause. When they roll back, they leave us with changed lives. Much that we have been for a long time building up, is swept away: treasures that we counted great, are left in ruin, and all our moral nature left a stranded debris." It is in such crises of life, that we are to bridle our tongue, and keep watch over our lips. The world is quick to judge of the inconsistencies in the conduct of those who profess to be the children of God, and when they find irritability, bitterness, and revenge, where there should be quiet resignation and childlike trust in all God's appointments, they conclude that religion has no power to change the life.

Dr. Macdonald, the great apostle of the North, had a son in the ministry, who at the call of providence surrendered his charge in the great city of London, to go forth as a missionary to India. Just when on the threshold of his work, he was called away. How his aged father received the sorrowful tidings is told in his memoirs, and strikingly illustrates the spirit of the text. In 1847, when on one of his preaching tours in Perthshire, and just before entering the pulpit, a letter was put into his hands. Intent upon his work, he put it unopened into his pocket. Next day as he was travelling, he recollected the letter, and on opening it found the tidings of his son's death. A few groans from a father's wounded heart, and a few tears from a fond father's eyes, and the christian triumphed over the man; and with his heart he said, "It is well." On reaching home, he preached from these words in his own pulpit. It is

well, he said, that he was born : it is well that he was educated : it is better far, that he was born again : it is well that he was licensed to preach the gospel : it is well that he was ordained as a pastor : it is well that he went to India ; and above all, it is well for him that he died : for thus, though away from us, and absent from the body, he has secured the gain of being for ever with the Lord. Such language is the spirit of the text, and such should be our attitude under the bitterest griefs, that leave the urn empty, and darken the lights of the dwelling.

Give me thy joy in sorrow, gracious Lord,
And sorrow's self shall like to joy appear!
Although the world should waver in its sphere,
I tremble not, if thou thy peace afford.

Peace then my heart,
Beyond the world's sad vibrating, and in thyself
Circle me, that I may feel no touches save of thee.

Thus far we have spoken of the text in its relation to personal afflictions that are beyond our ken—that perplex the profoundest thought and make the strongest faith to falter. But similar bereavements take place in the church and nation that compel men to pause amid the busy hum of life and stand aghast, petrified as it were, under the blow that makes the ship of state to tremble and the pillars of the commonwealth to shake. High hopes are in a moment crushed. The leaders of thought and valiant champions of truth and righteousness fall in the ranks, and the host wavers in the face of the enemy. It is as when in a moment the brightness of a summer's day is eclipsed by storm and darkness, and the gentle sighings of the wind give place to the thunder peal, and the angry breath of the simoon sweeps over the plain, spreading devastation and death in its pathway. Reason stands abashed in presence of such unthought of and sudden tragedies, and can only say: "He maketh the clouds his chariots, and walketh upon the wings of the wind. He toucheth the land and it melts, and all that dwell there-

in mourn. He makes darkness his secret place, his pavilion round about him are dark waters and thick clouds of the skies ;" while faith replies : " Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. Shall mortal man be more just than God ? Shall a man be more pure than his Maker ? The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice." Before such mysterious deeps of providence that confound human wisdom, we must be silent.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain ;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for his grace ;
Behind a frowning providence,
He hides a smiling face.

You can easily understand why I have selected these words for my discourse. In common with our stricken brethren in the United States, we are stunned and sorely amazed under the heavy calamity that has occupied the thoughts of our citizens and filled the columns of our newspapers during the last few days. It is indeed hard to realize that one so eminently qualified to be the ruler of a great nation ; so well fitted by nature and grace, by culture of mind and tenderness of soul—should be smitten by the hand of the assassin, and after weary days and nights of intense agony, when the courage and patience of the sufferer, and the skill and watchfulness of friends and physicians, battled against death, should at last give up the struggle and sink into that slumber that knows no waking till the resurrection morn ! To moralize in the presence of such an overwhelming grief is useless. It becomes us, like Aaron, to hold our peace, believing that what we know not now, we shall know here-

after, when we no longer see as through a glass darkly, but face to face.

It is unnecessary to recite the details of his life. His recent elevation to the highest gift within the offer of his countrymen, and his sudden, sad, and tragic end, have invested them with a singular and profound interest. His death has but reflected the fortitude and endurance of his youth and manhood, and brought into view the indomitable will that enabled him to rise superior to obstacles that overcome ordinary men. Religion was to him no new thing. We are told that when a college boy, camping among the mountains, he used at eventide to take out his Bible and say:—"Boys, at this time of evening I am apt to read a passage of Scripture; if you would like to hear it, I will read a chapter now." And then one of his companions was called upon to pray, and they all knelt in their summer tent. In the war he acted as chaplain to his men. His last solemn act, before leaving Mentor for Washington, was to take the holy sacrament of the supper, while tears of emotion rolled down his cheek. On the first opportunity offered, after he was shot, he said to Doctor Sunderland that he trusted all in the Lord's hand, for he was equally ready to die or live. And not long since, when the end seemed near, his attendant physicians said: "There is no need telling him he has to die, for he said at the start he had no preparations to make." God saw fit to beat and bruise the poor body upon the anvil and refine the soul in the sevenfold heated furnace, that when at length the hour of release arrived he should at once awake in the image of his Saviour. But at last, sweetly calm, like the passing away of a strain of music, or the dying out of the light of a summer's day, he escaped from pain and weakness to rest and immortal youth. Swift was the transition from the seeming unconsciousness of the death bed surroundings to the full realization of heaven's wonders. The weary voyager stepped on shore, and that shore was paradise; he took hold of a hand, and

found it the hand of his elder brother ; he breathed a new air, and found it celestial air ; he passed from storm and tempest to unbroken calm ; he awoke and found it glory.

President Garfield was the product of his age and country, where, in common with our own land, the highest honors are within the reach of the humblest sons of toil. Every step from the canal boat to the White House was marked by earnest, conscientious effort. Alike in the field and in the forum, he was the same brave, self-reliant, God-fearing man. In the words of Tennyson, we may describe him as—

A divinely gifted man,
Whose life in low estate began,
And on a simple village green,

Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,
And grasps the skirts of happy chance,
And breasts the blows of circumstance,
And grapples with his evil star.

Who makes by force his merit known,
And lives to clutch the golden keys,
To mould a mighty state's decrees,
And shape the whisper of the throne.

And moving up from high to higher,
Becomes on fortune's crowning slope,
The pillar of a nation's hope,
The centre of a world's desire.

And now, what are some of the lessons taught us by the death of such a good and gifted man ?

First,—The awful uncertainty of life. Possessed of a noble physique, and a sound constitution, that had been braced and built up by healthy exercise, and a stranger to those liquors and indulgences that so often sow the seeds of disease in the human frame—who so likely to live to fourscore years as President Garfield ? He seemed as one who, after serving his day and generation well, would

enjoy a long evening of repose, free from the cares of public office, and come to his grave like a shock of corn fully ripe.

The afternoon had just begun,
When came the calm of even time ;
Men said his life was at the prime ;
God said, His servant's task was done.

Death plies his sickle among the green grain as well as the ripe, and blights the most promising forms of manhood long before, to human conception, the life is complete and fully rounded out.

Secondly,—We are taught the vanity of earthly greatness. Higher, socially and politically, he could not go. In an incredibly short space of time he had vaulted from poverty to comparative affluence ; from obscurity to the Republican throne. When he took the oath of office, amid the rejoicings of a loyal people, how bright seemed the prospect before him ! The head of fifty millions of freemen, the equal in point of influence and power and intellect of the crowned heads of Europe ; grasping the reins of office at a time when the dark lines of separation between the North and South were growing dim, and when everything betokened contentment and harmony within the land—how grand and enviable seemed his lot ! Men regarded him as raised up and selected by Providence to break down faction and blot out the party strifes of former years, and heal the wounds of bleeding hearts, made by an unnatural war that decimated so many homes. Not many weeks before his inauguration as President, he was present and spoke on the occasion of the unveiling of a monument to the memory of soldiers who died in that unhappy rebellion. Among other things he said : “ I once entered a house in old Massachussets, where over its doors were two crossed swords. One was the sword carried by the grandfather of its owner, on the field of Bunker Hill, and the other was the sword carried by the English grand sire of his wife, on the same field, and on the same day of conflict. Under

those crossed swords, in the restored harmony of domestic peace, lived a happy and contented and free family, under the light of our republican liberties. And so I trust the time is not far distant, when under the crossed swords and the locked shields of Americans, North and South, our people shall sleep in peace, and rise in liberty, love, and harmony, under the union of one flag of the stars and stripes." Such a prophecy will yet be verified, but the lips that spoke such noble sentiments are now cold, and the heart that cherished them has passed away. Well may we say :

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour ;
The path of glory leads but to the grave.

Thirdly,—We are taught the grandeur of the Christian's death-bed. Not as a stoic, defiant of disease, and nerving himself against pain by an almost superhuman effort, but as a sinner, saved by atoning blood, did he face the enemy. The sting of death was extracted—its venom removed. Some call it a manly death—it was all this and more. It was an heroic death, because faith in the invisible made suffering easy of endurance.

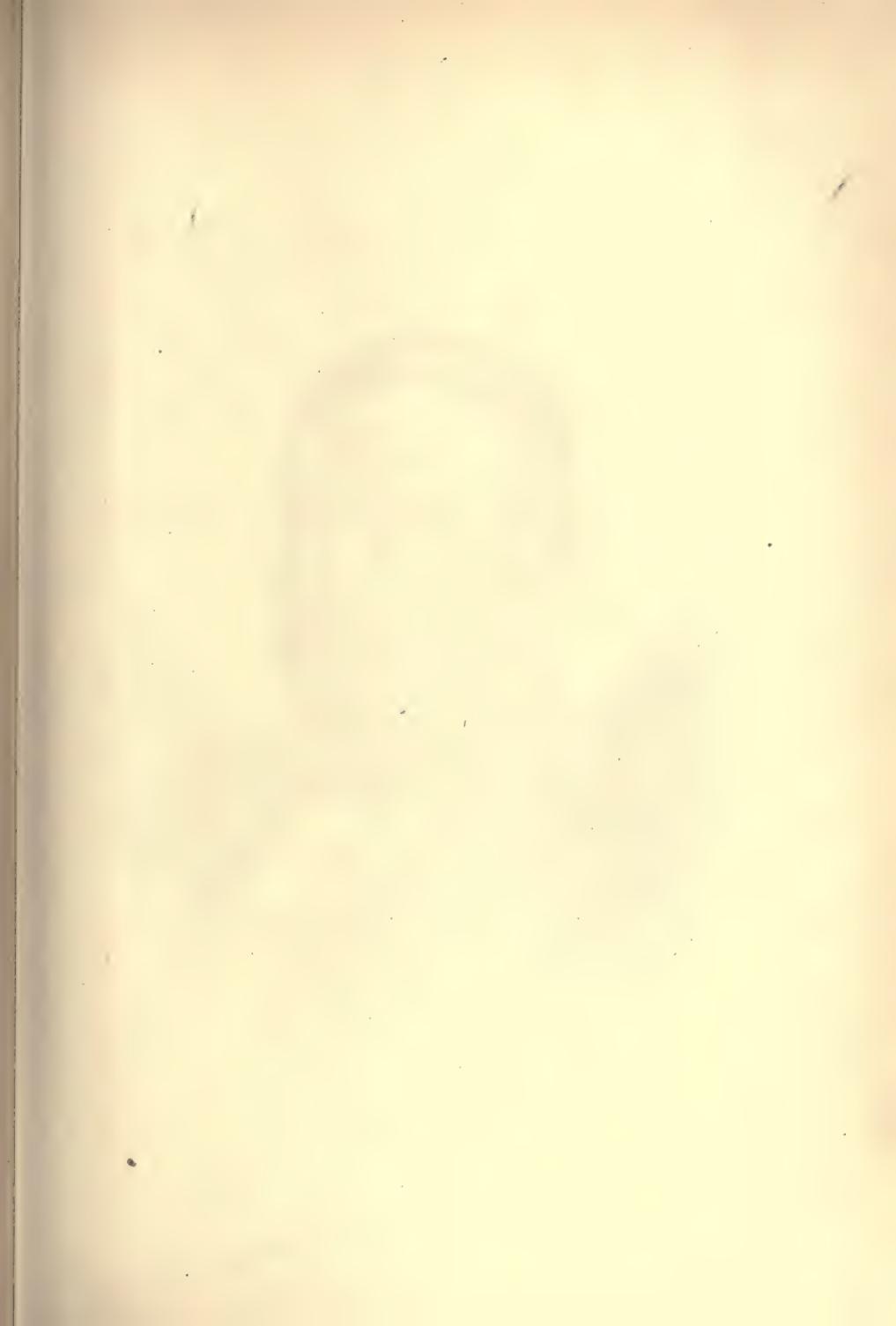
It is ever so. In that dread hour when heart and flesh faint and fail ; when we approach the dark mysteries of the valley ; when the eye loses its lustre, the tongue its speech, the mind its retentiveness, and the soul its consciousness ; nothing can give assured hope of a blissful immortality but simple trust in the merits of the crucified one.

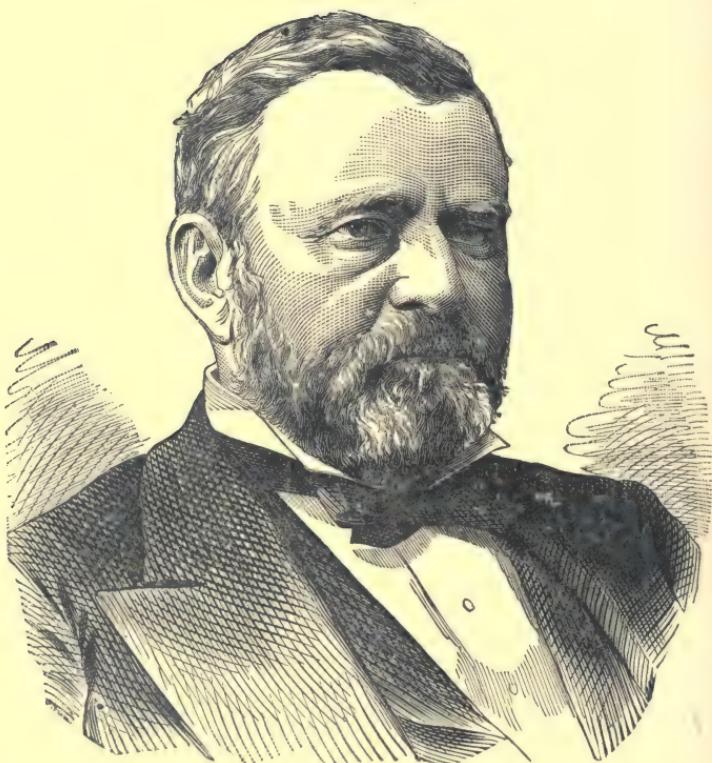
The consciousness that we have lived to some purpose, and that we have possibly served the state faithfully in the Senate or on the field, is of value. "To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die." But the best of patriots and benefactors have no monuments to mark their graves. Nor do they need them, for their memory is imperishable.

On fame's eternal camping ground,
Their silent tents are spread ;
While glory guards, with solemn round,
The bivouac of the dead.

Better far is the knowledge in a dying hour that Jesus waits us,
to give us a crown of immortelles that never fades.







U. S. GRANT.

General Grant.

“Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it.”

—1st Corinthians 12, v. 26.

GENERAL GRANT.

HERE is no schism in the human body. It is so constituted that the eye and the ear, the foot and the arm are intimately connected and interested in the well-being of each other. All alike are necessary to the complete physical organization of the individual man. The body is one, though composed of different members. There is a common consciousness. You cannot pain the one without causing pain in the very centre of life. Thus if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.

So it should be with the church of Christ. The visible body of believers is made up of individuals, not isolated nor independent, but related to each other in the closest bonds. From this union there springs sympathy—a bearing of each other's burdens—a sharing of each other's sorrows. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep, is the law of christian fellowship. “For whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.”

The same ought to be true of christian nations. As the welfare of the individual state or province depends upon the conduct of the units that compose it, so the best interests of society and the world at large are served by the co-operation of christian states and nations, in all that is productive of virtue and integrity, and by each showing sympathy with the other in whatever appeals to the better instincts of our common humanity. More especially it becomes nations that have sprung from a common ancestry, who are of one blood and one language, whose laws and customs are in the main alike, and whose institutions are founded upon a common christianity, to testify to the world that geographical boundaries and minor differences in forms of government cannot restrain or repress that overflow of genuine feeling, when sister commonwealths suffer the loss of eminent statesmen, or stand around the grave of those who have fought their battles, vindicated their honor, and advanced the world-wide cause of humanity and freedom.

Such sympathy has not been wanting in later years between Great Britain and the United States, and it is in itself one of the strongest evidences of that good feeling which exists and is increasing between two nations, which should mutually and conjointly seek, above their own private interests, the good of mankind in every clime and country. The touching messages flashed beneath the ocean from Queen Victoria to the widows of martyred Presidents and dead commanders, have done more to cement the old and new worlds in bonds of lasting brotherhood, than all the treaties and diplomacies of skilled and crafty statesmen.

It is, therefore, eminently fitting that in this land and in this city and church, where many present have assembled in former years to pay the tribute of affectionate regard to the memories of Lincoln and Garfield, we should seek to know something of those elements of character that made the life of General Grant so conspicuous, his death so lamented, and his memory so dear to the

nation that he loved and served so well. Not to speak words of extravagant eulogy over the dead, nor seek to minimize or excuse any faults and failings which may have marked the life of the dead soldier, are we met to-night, but to unite with the great heart of the world, which is ever just, in paying homage to the memory of a man, who fearlessly, faithfully and unselfishly did his duty according to the light he had ; and to magnify that grace by which he was ultimately led in childlike faith to acknowledge his dependence upon Him who made him what he was, and gave him strength to do what he did.

The death of General Grant has called forth in almost every quarter of the civilized world unmistakable declarations that true nobility of nature, independent of accidental birth and fortune, commands universal regard, and deserves the highest honors. Westminster Abbey (when the flags on the royal residences of Windsor and Osborne were lowered), crowded with the representatives of royalty and the bravest English hearts, all united in paying respect to the memory of one, not of their own but of another land, presented a sight that only at great intervals occurs in the history of civilized and christian nations. The barriers of rank and party, and national differences, disappear on such occasions. Palace, castle and hovel are alike in tears. By men who inhabit distant lands and speak diverse tongues, the pangs of a personal bereavement are felt as they join in solemn service in memory of the dead. As Federal and Confederate soldiers lift the bier, word comes across the ocean that the nations of the earth bow their heads in silent grief. It is no blind and sudden impulse which impels such deep and wide-spread mourning. It is the verdict of mankind upon a great character (whose deeds have electrified the world), now unexpectedly closed, after a long and painful sickness. As has been aptly said, "those who fear that religious faith is dying, and that science has shaken the hold of moral law upon the minds of men,

are staggered and rebuked by the sight." No base or ignoble passions could so move the nations of the earth. But a single life is stricken down, and a dark cloud seems to settle on the sky and obscure the sun. Men speak with bated breath. The minute gun, the muffled drum, the tolling bell, silence in senate chambers and courts of justice and halls of learning, public buildings draped in black, mourners marching by the tens of thousands with measured step to the saddest music, the land filled with lamentations "from the savannahs of the South to the snow-capped hills of the North, and from where the Atlantic moans along its ancient coast, to where the Pacific sobs on its golden shore,"—all tell that a king among men is dead !

Who was this man thus followed to the tomb by a hundred thousand of his own countrymen? I need not give details of his early life. These are to be found in the pages of biography. Like Abraham Lincoln, the rail splitter and Mississippi boatman, who finally became the most honest and God-fearing of modern statesmen ; like Garfield, who, from a poor shoeless child, rose to be teacher, preacher and President—so Grant, from the tannery of Galena, became the foremost man of his age, the hero of many battles and the chief citizen of a nation, which, second to none other, moulds the civilization and directs the destinies of the world. How different the circumstances connected with the birth of men ! The birth of a prince is announced by salvos of artillery and the ringing of joy bells in city, town and hamlet ; but the poor man's son enters the world unnoticed. "Weigh them both in the scale of eternity and the difference between them is not perceptible. In both cases a life has begun which shall never end—a heart begins to throb which must be filled with delight or anguish—a soul has sprung into being which shall outlive the earth and see the sun extinguished as a taper in the sky." In both cases the conduct of the individual, independent of the adventitious circumstances of rank or

fortune, makes the life commonplace or grand, a source of blessing or a perpetual curse !

General Grant was born in a sphere far off from the one for which God ultimately intended him. For some forty years he lived in comparative obscurity, giving but little indication of his wonderful genius and strength of will. But these years were not lost. During that period he was being prepared for the great work of his life, when called not simply to save a nation from dismemberment, but to give a new direction to the civilization of the world. "The workings of his masterful mind were hidden beneath the silence of his lips ; but when the supreme moment came, there came also an intellectual elevation, an up-lifting of the whole being, a transformation of the silent, thoughtful General, which surprised his foes and astonished his friends. He culminated at the crisis, and was at his best when most needed." It is Longfellow, I think, who says that great men stand like solitary towers in the city of God, and secret passages running deep beneath external nature, give their thoughts intercourse with higher intelligences, which strengthens and consoles them, and of which the laborers on the surface do not even dream. It was so in the case of Grant. He did more than was expected of him. Other men of more brilliant records failed where he was successful. Undemonstrative, taciturn and silent, he passed on from victory to victory, so unheralded and quietly as to win for him the gratitude of his own people and the admiration of the world. In General Grant's case, as in the case of many others who have served their country, it may be said :

The strength that makes a nation great,
In secret is supplied ;
The energies that build the state,
In humble virtues hide.

From christian homes among the hills,
The streams of influence flow ;
The force that fights with earthly ills,
And overcomes the foe.

The noblest benefactors of the world, in science, literature, philanthropy and religion, have sprung from lowly origin. Sextus the fifth from being a swineherd, was called to wave a sceptre ; Ferguson spent his early days in tending sheep ; God called him to look after stars, and be a shepherd watching the flocks of light "on the hill sides of heaven." Hogarth, the wonderful artist and painter, began life by engraving pewter pots ; Bloomfield sat for a time on the shoemaker's bench ; God called him to sit in the chair of a philosopher and scholar ; Hawley was called from soap boiling in London, to become one of the greatest astronomers of England ; Martin Luther was the son of a peasant miner ; Virgil, the son of a potter ; Demosthenes, of a smith ; Columbus, of a cloth weaver ; Ben Johnson of a brick layer ; Shakespeare of a wool trader ; Burns, of a cotter ; Whitfield, of an inn-keeper ; Carlyle of an Ecclefechan farmer ; Henry Kirke White, that poetic genius, whose dust lies outside the walls of Rome awaiting a blessed resurrection, was the son of a Nottingham butcher, and David Livingstone, whose remains rest in Westminster Abbey—the model missionary of the world—was, when a boy, a cotton piecer and spinner. As the poet says :

These souls flash out like the stars of God,
From the midnight of the mine :
No castle is theirs, no palace great,
No princely pillared hall ;
But they well can laugh at the roofs of state,
'Neath the heaven which is over all.

Each bares his arm for the ringing strife,
That marshals the sons of the soil,
And the sweat-drops shed in the battle of life
Are gems in the crown of toil ;
And prouder their well-worn wreaths, I trow,
Than laurels with life-blood wet ;
And nobler the arch of a bare, bold brow,
Than the clasp of a coronet.

Hard work and poverty, self-control and misfortune, often make self-reliant, courageous, and victorious spirits. Rich men's sons are heavily weighted in the race of existence. "A basketful of bonds and debentures is the heaviest burden that a young man can carry. The temptations of wealth and affluence are such as to sink the most promising lives." Had such been the lot of Grant, how different in all likelihood would have been the meridian and close of his life! It was the early discipline he underwent and the drudgery of mental toil that prepared him for the command of the American army, and subsequently for the onerous duties of the Presidential chair. No man can become a ruler of men, who does not rule his own spirit and deny himself ease and indulgence in early years. He who steadily and patiently applies himself to the work of to-day, and discharges his duties to his fellow-men in a spirit of unselfishness and as under the eye of his Maker, is the man who when the crisis comes is found equal to its demands. The hour came when the Republic needed a strong, calm, iron-clad will to direct its armies and save its very life, and with the hour came the man. At once he was recognized as a dominant magnetic spirit, mighty in grasp of details ; strong in purpose ; facile in execution ; not easily daunted or discouraged ; far-seeing and determined ; a man who reasoned out his campaigns, and fought them with a tenacity of purpose that inspired confidence in his colleagues and subordinates. The nation at once felt the touch of a master's hand, and the rebellion was crushed under the potency of his iron will. It was not mere good fortune or luck, as some historians have asserted, that made Grant the saviour of his country, although it need not be disputed that he was called to command at an opportune hour, but "by the upward gravitation of natural forces," by inflexible faithfulness, indomitable resolution, sleepless energy and persistent tenacity, he rose step by step to the highest position a nation can offer a citizen.

And yet, like many brave men who preceded him in command of the northern army, there was a time when it looked as if he also might be recalled and added to the many who had failed to satisfy the eager, impetuous, and at times unreasonable cry for a speedy termination of the war—a war that for extent and fierceness has but seldom been equalled in the history of the world. Seward, the able and acute Secretary of State, prophesied that in ninety days peace would be restored, and on this false, though not unnatural assumption, many able generals, who had in succession commanded the army of the Republic, but who could not accomplish impossibilities, were consigned to private life, or relegated to inferior positions. Grant's military genius suffered such momentary depreciation. The nation, bleeding at every pore, and almost driven to desperation, became impatient, exacting, and clamorous for immediate results. But Grant heard, as if he heard it not. He had the rare grace of silence under provocation. He knew that time was essential to the mighty undertaking entrusted to his hands, and that neither civilians nor carping editors could grasp the deadly struggle in which the nation was engaged. He waited patiently for the storm to pass ; uttered no word of complaint ; attempted no explanation nor vindication of his plans ; and kept on assured of ultimate success. Like all self-possessed men, who have thoroughly matured and mastered their powers, he heeded not public clamor. To the cry for speedy victories, he only replied : “ I propose to fight it out on this line, if it takes all summer.” He did so, and the end justified the wisdom of the great General, and the means employed to crush the rebellion, and restore lasting peace and good will between North and South.

Among many exceedingly pleasing traits of character illustrated in his life, may be found the following :

I. The modest estimate he entertained of his own part in the war for the preservation of the Union, and the generous and un-

stinted praise which he lavished on officers and men. In the battles of the Wilderness he illustrated the saying of Wellington at Waterloo, "Hard pounding, gentlemen ; we shall see who will pound the longest :" and he won that campaign by simple pertinacious pounding. But in the campaign against Vicksburg, an apparently invulnerable fortress was captured "by a combination of brilliant conception, execution and patient perseverance, against what were at first superior odds, and despite serious difficulties within his own camp, and in the attitude of both government and people behind his back." And yet so far from taking any special credit to himself for what was admitted on all hands to be the greatest military triumph of the war, he simply said : " The campaign of Vicksburg was suggested and developed by circumstances ; Providence directed its course, while the army of the Tennessee executed the decree ! "

II. Like all really great and good commanders, he hated war, and was by inclination a man of peace. It was not that he delighted in battle's stern array, that he stood in the breach at the call of his countrymen, and directed movements that resulted in the death of many foemen worthy of a nobler end. He regarded war as a ghastly monster, "whose march is to the widow's sigh and the orphan's cry." In his London speech of 1877 he said :—" Although a soldier by education and profession, I have never felt any sort of fondness for war and I have never advocated it, except as a means of peace." This is the right view to take of war. Battles are grand to read about, when looked at from afar, and often are grand in their results, but those who take part in them and know most about them are far from lavish in their praise. Louis Napoleon, although seemingly regardless of bloodshed, had his dreams badly haunted by the slaughter of Solferino. The field of Waterloo and such scenes made Wellington detest its ravages and lament its necessity. Indeed, every rightly constituted mind must join in the Psalmist's

prayer: "Scatter thou the people that delight in war." But bad as war is, there are some things worse. When war is the only alternative to redress national grievances, or end flagrant wrongs, it is right and proper, despite of its horrors. While we deprecate its evils, and pray that it may never again touch our borders, we are not of those who regard it as the greatest calamity that can afflict a nation. While war has slain its thousands, peace has slain its tens of thousands. In the breast of all noble minded men there has been implanted the feeling that war, and even death, in a good and virtuous cause, is preferable to ignominious servitude. To use the language put into the mouth of a Roman Senator:

A Christian people cannot long debate
Which of the two to choose—Slavery or Death?
A day, an hour of virtuous liberty
Is worth a whole eternity of bondage.

If such views be correct, then that nation which prepares for war in times of peace shows the highest wisdom. In surrounding herself with the necessary elements of defence, and having ready at her call strong arms and willing hearts to vindicate the country's honor and bear aloft the flag of freedom, she ensures her safety and perpetuity. It was this feeling that prompted Grant to accept the leadership of the northern army, and fight against men with whom he had much in common. Personal friendships he sacrificed on the altar of his country's liberties. He felt that nothing but the severest measures could preserve the Union inviolable, and blend all its parts and parties in more indissoluble bonds than ever they had been before.

It is neither the time nor place to refer at length to the war that brought General Grant into such prominence. Now that it is a thing of the past, and North and South have been welded as one over the grave of the dead hero, it is better to be silent than rake up the smouldering ashes of those fires that for a time burned so

fiercely. But this much may be ventured, that the two elements that had existed for a century in the United States (indeed prior to the revolution of 1776), could not in the nature of things continue for ever. The so-called irrepressible conflict between abolitionists and pro-slavery men, could not be put down. It meant either the annihilation of the Union, or the annihilation of slavery. It ended as we all know in the latter, in the emancipation and enfranchisement of the negro, but not as some would have it, in the humiliation of the South. Rapidly recovering from what she lost, by a system entailed upon her by preceding generations, she bids fair to become the rival of the Northern States, in all that appertains to the highest civilization and the purest morality.

The conduct of General Grant after the war, in his eagerness to efface all scars and put an end to estrangements and bitter animosities, is still lovingly remembered by the Southern States. It is well known that after the lamented death of Lincoln, President Johnson was determined to make an example of such Southern generals as Lee and others, who had been foremost in defying the Northern arms. Grant protested against and resisted such proceedings. He said that the honor of the nation was at stake—that by the conditions of surrender such men could not be sacrificed. The manly courage of a soldier's heart thus saved many Confederates from an ignominious death. For this, is it wonderful, that the South respected him when living, and honor him when dead!

III. The humility of the dying soldier, his consideration for those who waited upon him through his long days and nights of suffering ; his chastened resignation to God's will ; his calm, unostentatious, but implicit trust in the mercy of God, are among the sweetest recollections that can be cherished of his memory.

The closing days of the Duke of Wellington were marked by the same childlike simplicity and gratitude. After one of his last and greatest victories, he went to receive the sacrament, and as he

was kneeling in the church a poor man came and knelt beside him. The church warden said : "Go away, this is the Duke of Wellington." The great conqueror of Waterloo replied : "Let him alone—we are equal here!" And when the Duke was dying, the last thing he took was a little tea. On his servant's handing it to him in a saucer, and asking him if he would have it, he replied in the last words he spoke, "Yes, if you please." How much kindness and courtesy is expressed in them ! He who had commanded the greatest armies in Europe and had long been accustomed to the throne of authority, did not despise or overlook the smallest courtesies of life.

It was very much the same with General Grant. He was gently considerate of those who waited upon him, and often urged them to take rest. On the night preceding his death he turned to those who were watching lovingly by his bedside and said : "Do not stop up—do not distress yourselves on my account." To his son he said, indicating his solicitude for her, who had so long shared his humble and his grander life : "I hope mother will bear up," while to herself he said : "Do as I do, take it quietly ; I give myself not the least concern. If I knew the end was to-morrow, I would just try as hard to get rest in the meantime. Go to sleep and feel happy, that is what I want to do, and am going to try, for I am happy when out of pain. Consider how happy you ought to be. Good night." And such was the tenderness of his love for her, he surprised her by a letter found upon his person after death: He had written it at intervals and secretly, and carried the missive for fourteen days, knowing that she would find it after his death. It read as follows : "Look after our dear children, and direct them in the paths of rectitude. It would distress me far more to think that one of them should depart from an honorable, upright, and virtuous life, than it would be to know that they were prostrated on a bed of sickness from which they were never to arise alive.

They have never given us any cause for alarm on their account, and I earnestly pray they never will. With these few injunctions and the knowledge I have of your love and affection, and of the dutiful affection of all our children, I bid you a final farewell, until we meet in another and I trust a better world. You will find this on my person after my demise."

But it is asked, what of General Grant's religious belief? How did he meet the last enemy? Was he merely reconciled to the inevitable stroke of death by a soldier's stoicism? Were his fears all removed? Was his acceptance of Christ and the atonement real? Was his end perfect peace? Was the dark valley illuminated by the radiance of the New Jerusalem? I think that no one who places any confidence in the honesty and dying declarations of the dead soldier can doubt his simple faith in the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ. His best friends and admirers would doubtless have wished that long before his last illness, he had been more pronounced and outspoken regarding that faith in which he died. Like many who preceded him in the Presidential chair, Grant was not a member in full communion of any church. Though he regularly attended public worship and took considerable interest in congregational affairs, he never sat down at the Lord's table, and was baptized but a short time before his death. Referring to this fact, Dr. Byron Sutherland, of Washington, in whose church General Grant for some time worshipped (and where President Cleveland attends), said in his memorial sermon: "On this topic, at a most solemn moment in the experience of the nation, I will not forbear to avow, what I have many times repeated on former occasions, that no more essential or important duty belongs to our public men, than making a public profession of their christian faith through the solemn ordinances of the christian church. The value of such testimony, given in such a manner to the contemporary and coming generations, is simply priceless. If men believe in Christ, let

them have the candor and courage to confess, and that in the most solemn forms which the rites of the church impose. It is not good to postpone this profession against all the chances of a sudden death, for while a man may count on the divine compassion to the last moment, he ought not to hazard the opportunity of leaving behind him the most positive evidence he can ever give of his peace with God through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord."

With such manly words we heartily agree. In spite of his many noble qualities, General Grant is not held up as a perfect example. But what shall we say of the many in all our churches, who, in circumstances perhaps more favorable to decision for Christ, still delay to act? Grey hairs are upon their heads, and they know it not. And what shall we say of those, who although for many years members of christian churches, can hardly be distinguished from the most ungodly around them? In the character of General Grant, the gold and iron were mingled with the clay. But in the case of many of his detractors, there is the clay without the gold and iron. To-night, therefore, in thankfulness for what God made him by nature, and still more by grace, we bury his faults in the grave and make his virtues bloom above it. We magnify that divine spirit that enabled the hero of so many battles, even at the last to acknowledge his dependence upon the mercy of God, and cling to covenant promises in a dying hour; while at the same time we warn the careless ones not to rest contented with the hope that they may enjoy the same. "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his," is a very pious sentiment, but unless accompanied by personal faith and practical godliness, is of no avail.

In this connection it may not be out of place to refer to the purity of his speech and his utter abhorrence of everything that savored of profanity. In an age like this, when oaths and reckless appeals to the Almighty, and unchaste inuendoes are found upon

the lips of men of far greater pretensions to piety than General Grant, such an example should not be without value. Even in the stress of battle an oath never polluted his lips. His speech was pure up to the standard of maidenly chastity. Mr. Pierpont, the American Minister to Great Britain in 1877, tells of one occasion when he and General Grant dined at the house of a distinguished politician. The subject of religion in some way was introduced, and one man present treated it with mockery. Grant showed his feelings by abstaining from all further conversation with the man, and on leaving said to the ambassador, "the conversation of that man so shocked me, that I could not talk nor enjoy the dinner." On the General's staff during the war, in one of his campaigns, was a rough and ready fighter, full of strange oaths and stranger vulgarities. One evening, in the presence of Grant and several brother officers, he opened the conversation in some such way as this, "I have got a mighty good thing to tell you. It would hardly do to repeat, of course, in the presence of ladies." "Well," said the General, interrupting him in his firm, but quiet way, "allow me to suggest, then, that it might be advisable to omit it in the presence of gentlemen." Need I add to this well timed rebuke, that profanity has no possible justification. No man worthy of the name ought to indulge in it. It indicates an unclean and sensual nature where the spirit of God cannot dwell. It debases and degrades manhood. The presence of unclean lips in society—or those who curse their fellows in the holy name of the Divine being—is an immeasurable evil. No condemnation is too great for such a vice, no punishment too swift or severe.

And now all is over so far as the life on earth of the great General is concerned.

Samson hath quit himself like Samson,
And heroically hath ended
A life heroic.

The battles he fought and won ; the acts of his administration ; the honors paid him by the monarchs of the old world, when a few years ago he passed from kingdom to kingdom ; the skill and attention of physicians ; the unwearied attendance of relatives around his bedside, and the prayers of his own and other nations, all availed nothing to stay the remorseless king of terrors. The palace of the king and hut of the peasant cannot resist his summons. "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might ; let not the rich man glory in his riches, but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth." Here is the true ground for glorying. Wisdom, might, and riches are at the present day sought after as affording the highest happiness. In old Testament times, strength and martial valor were regarded as pre-eminent virtues. Muscular prowess and the ability to lead victorious armies to and from the battle field, were accounted of far more value than mental superiority. Samson and Saul, head and shoulders above the people, were looked upon as demi-gods, objects of envy and wonder to the masses. And the possession of power in some form or other, is still regarded as the highest possible attainment. To exercise authority in church or state ; to control gigantic corporations ; to occupy high positions in the commercial or political world, is the life long passion of millions. But neither wisdom nor power nor riches are permanent on earth. God often turns wisdom into foolishness, might into impotency, and riches into poverty, while at death they are all left behind. When men draw near the invisible world these things are of little service. Then we need a personal God ; the firm hold of a hand that controls the destinies of the universe ; and confidence in his faithfulness, who is never absent from the bedside of the dying saint. A Saviour slain is the only boast of a dying sinner. How weak is he who has nothing

beyond an arm of flesh to lean upon in the hour of dissolution? How sad are the last pulsations of the mighty man, who has ruled over kingdoms or republics, and struck terror into the hearts of millions, but at last trembles at the cold touch of death! Better far is he, however poor and unknown, who, as he places in Christ's hand his weal or his woe for eternity, can say:

In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time,
All the lights of sacred story
Gather round its head sublime.
When the woes of life o'ertake me,
Hopes deceive and fears annoy,
Never shall the cross forsake me,
Lo! it glows with peace and joy.

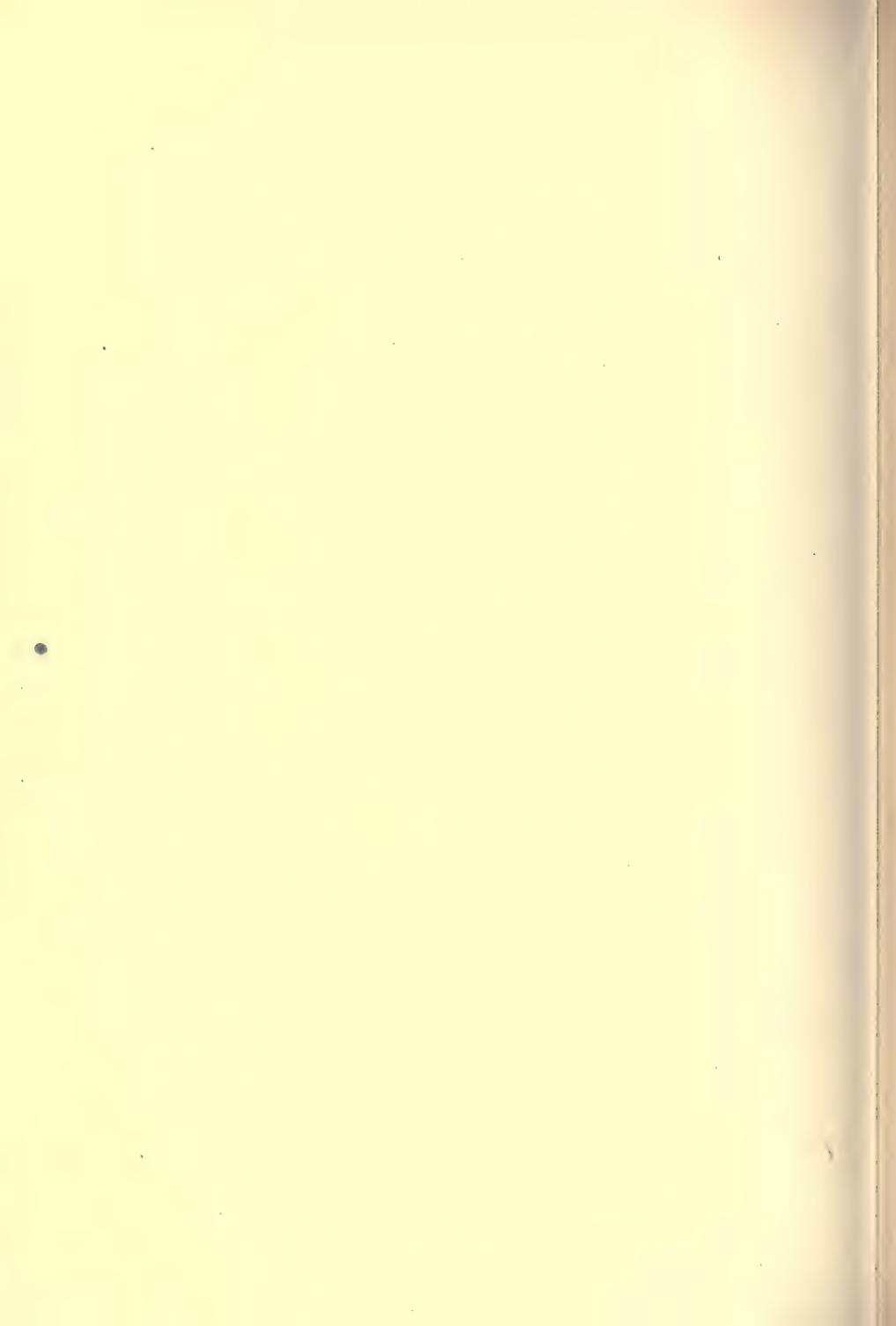
The death of General Grant, preceded by the sad and lamented deaths of such unselfish lives as those of Lincoln and Garfield, ought not to be lost upon the nation they loved and served so well. Long cavalcades of mourners are not out of place, nor will their graves be neglected. In coming years pilgrims from foreign lands will stand in reverent homage with uncovered heads around the mausoleum at Riverside, as they do over Washington's at Mount Vernon; and tourists passing up and down the beautiful Hudson, will strain their eyes to catch a glimpse of the spot where lies the body of the great soldier. But better far will it be, if the people who lament his death, take to heart the lessons of his life, his courage, patience, integrity, steadfastness and love of justice. During the war one of America's most eloquent orators prophesied that the time would come when the North and South, cleansed from the iniquity of slavery, should cordially grasp the hands of freemen for freedom. That day in part has come, its full realization let us hope and pray for. Only second to that of her own people, is the interest of Canada and Britain in the prosperity of the United States. As Canon Farrar said, in his admirable sermon on the death of

General Grant: "Whatever there be between the two nations to forgive and forget, is forgiven and forgotten. If the two peoples which are one, be true to their duty, who can doubt that the destinies of the world are in their hands? Let America and England march in the van of freedom and progress, showing the world not only a magnificent spectacle of human happiness, but a still more magnificent spectacle of two peoples united, loving righteousness and hating iniquity, inflexibly faithful to the principles of eternal justice, which are the unchanging law of God." If at times our brethren across the lines should, in the exercise of a not unnatural pride, speak disparagingly of monarchies and boast of their republican simplicity, at heart they are not insensible to the greatness and glory of the land whence they sprang. As one of their poets says:—

Thicker than water, in one rill,
Through centuries of story,
Our Saxon blood has flowed, and still
We share with you the good and ill,
The shadow and the glory.



CHARACTER AND CULTURE.



Christian Manliness.

“Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.”

—Ephesians 6, v. 10.

CHRISTIAN MANLINESS.

HEN Saint Paul wrote these words, he was breathing a military atmosphere, and brought into contact with all the minutiae of a soldier's life. The epistle was written from the Prætorian camp at Rome, where the Apostle was a constant spectator of the discipline, evolutions and equipment of the Roman army. There were believing men in that army to whom Paul preached, and in his addresses and epistles it was most natural that he should make use of just such metaphors as are contained in this letter. He was thoroughly aware, that in order to success in preaching, he must not only use language understood by his hearers, but also select his illustrations from the special walk in life in which they moved.

Christian life in the first century was literally a warfare. It was not simply a conflict with spiritual enemies, but a constant encounter with the civil power. No measures were regarded too severe in order to extirpate the true religion from the earth and crush its professors. Bonds and imprisonments, scourgings and cruel tortures, were the daily experience of all who refused conformity to

Paganism. To such a life every christian was called at the very outset of his discipleship. The trials before him were well known. Nothing was concealed. He was enjoined to count the cost, and weigh well the consequences of becoming a convert to christianity. The loss of life was indeed such a certainty, that Christ was accustomed, in speaking of it, to promise as an offset life everlasting in the world to come.

Before proceeding to enumerate the different parts of the christian's armor, the Apostle insists upon strength as an essential quality in a good soldier. A man to be successful in military life, whether as a private or an officer, must possess courage and bravery —a certain measure of reckless daring, and a disregard of minor consequences and hardships, which are inseparable from active duty. Strength of body and firmness of muscle, without heroism of soul, are unwieldy elements in modern warfare. To clothe a timid, craven-hearted coward in a coat of mail, is folly. Only those who are strong in themselves, are fit to put on armor or use it on the battle-field.

This principle, so far as regards physical strength and perfect health, is well understood and acted upon in recruiting for the army. Unless in times when conscription is necessary, and governments are all but desperate for new levies, the most searching scrutiny is made of volunteers. None that are unsound or defective in their bodily organs, or laboring under disease, are admitted to the ranks. Now, says the Apostle, what is demanded as a pre-requisite in a common soldier, is absolutely necessary in the fiery contest with spiritual enemies, to which every believer is called. The church has no room for weak, unsteady members ; for such as break the ranks through cowardice, or cause panic and alarm when she is on the eve of victory. It is not the force of numbers, but the discipline and fortitude of the few, that achieves the mightiest results.

Then five can chase an hundred, and an hundred put ten thousand to flight.

As the christian life is conceived of by many at the present day, strength seems to be the very last quality demanded. Nothing is considered more incongruous than such an exhortation. Meekness, gentleness and forbearance—a certain effeminacy of disposition and backwardness of action, are recognised as the most becoming traits of christian character, just as if these might not be united to firmness of purpose and determination of will. Nothing is so beautiful in inorganic matter as a polished pillar, but in order to stand polishing, it needs solidity and strength. It is very true that the man of God should be gentle ; not given to strife or contention ; a lover of peace, and an example of long-suffering and patience. But these qualities are not incompatible with the injunction of the text. The scriptural idea of christian character is not a mere collection of negatives, which require but little sacrifice to practise. On the contrary, believers are exhorted to seek after the highest qualities of true manhood, chief of which is moral and spiritual strength ; that supernatural power conferred upon God's children, whereby they are enabled not only to overcome inherent evil, but combat successfully against the temptations and wiles of a seductive world. Never did General seek to inspire his soldiers with enthusiasm and valor on the eve of a mighty conflict as Paul does, when addressing these Ephesian converts.

But it may be objected that all natures are not constituted alike ; that in the church as in the world, there are diversities of gifts and graces ; and that it is well nigh impossible to graft upon a naturally timid temperament, the element of strength. If by this it is meant that there will always be found some who are less ardent and fervent in their manifestations of zeal, we are agreed. But if it is maintained that some men never can possess the element of strength referred to in the text, we reply that the Word of God

teaches far differently. The strength spoken of is not self acquired ; it is not created or fostered by our own unaided efforts ; we are to rely upon the strength of God for our strength and draw from that source all the higher energies of our being. This mysterious power is the result of the union of the human with the Divine, in virtue of which we can, like Jacob of old, successfully contend with the Angel of the Covenant. Says this same Apostle elsewhere, enumerating the heroes of old Testament days : " Through faith they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

The usual elements of strength upon which the great majority of men rely in the struggle of life, are by no means to be despised. (a) Bodily vigor for example—the healthy action of all the physical powers is not to be undervalued. There is a most intimate connection between mind and body. They act and re-act the one upon the other. And thus the healthy action of the body tends to the healthy action of the mind, and is intimately related to manliness and morals. (b) Industry is another source of strength ; and one that is much insisted upon in the Word of God. It produces self-reliance and independence of character, and gives to life a dignity and a lustre which profligacy and prodigality never can attain. (c) Knowledge is another element of strength, and one that cannot be unduly exalted. Knowledge of men and things, whether gained by study, or the result of observation and experience, is of incalculable importance. In secular affairs it is head that governs the world, and not hands. Knowledge conjoined with industry raises a man to an immeasurable height above his fellows, and gives him a place among the peers and princes of earth. Embracing both means and ends it directs labor to a successful issue, and makes material objects become the handmaids of the soul. And (d)

finally, I need hardly add that wealth is one of the chief elements of strength at the present day, and is likely to continue so. Nor is it wrong that money should be sought after, provided the power and influence and standing thus acquired, is expended for the good of men. It is a poor thing to rely upon wealth alone for moral strength, to gather it year by year, simply to be called a millionaire, and die bankrupt in soul while rich in material things. But if, as stewards of God's bounties, we honestly acquire a larger share of this world's goods, than falls to the lot of our fellowmen, and disburse them for the advancement of His glory, we can wield a power second to none other in this world for the good of men. But while all these elements of strength are recognised in Scripture as worthy of possession, the christian, in view of his higher wants, is enjoined to lay hold of that Divine strength, which is derived from communion with Heaven, and a continuous sense of God's presence in and around us. What men most need in the turmoil of existence, is not outward material support, but hidden resources of Almighty strength that can stand the pressure of sorrow and the shock of adversity. They want something upon which they can rely, when days of danger and darkness overtake them, and earthly friendships fail ; something that will invigorate the fainting heart in sickness, sorrow, and disappointment, and sustain in the final struggle with the King of Terrors, never once abandoning them, until the yearnings and aspirations of the soul are satisfied with the fulness of eternity.

These remarks prepare us, I think, for a better understanding of the text. "Finally, my brethren,"—to end the discussion and sum up all that has been said—"be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." As if Paul said, "I am about to specify the different pieces of armour provided for your conflict with the Prince of Darkness. But unless you possess Divine power, you cannot wield them to purpose." It were like covering the stripling David

with Saul's heavy coat of mail, to put into the hands of a weak and trembling saint, such mighty and destructive weapons. It needs a strong arm to wield the sword of the spirit, and a practised eye to use the shield of faith.

In view, then, of what has been already advanced, we remark :

First,—That God is the source of all moral and spiritual strength. “In himself,” says an old writer, “a christian is wondrous weak, even vanity itself, but take him as he is built upon the promises, and as he is in God, and then he is a kind of almighty person.” It is when a man realizes his own personal inability and emptiness, that he is filled with all the fulness of the Godhead, and is enabled to resist every adversary. Thus Paul says elsewhere: “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed: we are perplexed, but not in despair: persecuted, but not forsaken: cast down, but not destroyed.” “Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distress for Christ’s sake, for when I am weak, then am I strong. I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.” This is not the language of boasting, but the experience of one who had endured more suffering, and performed more labor in the cause of Christ, than perhaps fell to the lot of any human being. And in order that others may be incited to similar self-denial and courage, with the hope of success against abounding evils, he holds himself up as an example of what is possible to every man in every condition of life. “I can do all things:” resist temptation, suffer affliction, enjoy prosperity, endure adversity, defy the powers of earth and hell—in a word, carry myself heroically in every calling and condition of life. And not to weary you with quotations, when this same Apostle speaks of his incessant labors in the establishment of the early churches, in order that all the glory and honor might redound to the Master, he says: “By the grace of God I am what I am. His grace which was bestowed on me was not in vain: but I labored more abund-

dantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

Out of Christ, indeed, there is no real power to advance in personal holiness, or benefit our fellow-men. As the heads of those rivers that ran through Paradise were out of Paradise, so the fountain-head of those streams that water the heart of the believer, is outside of himself. As the branch severed from the tree is lifeless, so man apart from Christ is barren, powerless, dead. As without the beams of the natural sun, and the constant moisture of the clouds, the earth becomes a parched and desert wilderness, so without the gracious influences of Heaven, and the contact of God's spirit within the soul, there can be no vigor in the higher life. As the chords of the harp must be touched by the fingers of the musician before any sound is heard, so the chords of the human heart must be tuned and sanctified by God's spirit before they can sound His praise.

Secondly,—Let us enquire how we should use this God-given strength.

(a) We should be strong in the faith. By "the faith" is meant the gospel, which contains the foundation of all our hope for time and eternity. The Bible may be accepted as a creed, and believed in as a system of doctrine, without any real profit to the soul. Its promises may excite no more interest than the highly colored and fascinating visions of dreamland, which gratify the imagination of childhood. This cold speculating way of holding the truths of revelation, is too common among professing christians. They regard the Bible with a sort of superstitious reverence. They accord it the highest place in literature as the words of inspiration, but they refuse to follow its counsels, or trust in the mercy it offers. There is no appropriation of its vital truths to meet the yearnings of the soul, and no reliance upon the pledges of infinite love, made over to us by the death of Christ. Baxter's words are as true to-

day as when they were spoken: "I take it to be the greatest cause of coldness in duty, weakness in grace, boldness in sinning, and unwillingness to die, that our faith in the divine authority of the Scriptures is either unsound or infirm. Christians in many cases receive the truth by tradition. Godly ministers and friends tell them so and so: it is impious to doubt, and therefore they believe it. Faith in the verity of Scripture would be an exceeding help to the joy of the saints."

Now such a respectful regard for God's Word is of no practical value. Christian life as a consequence remains monotonous, lethargic, and stagnant as the slimy pools of water, that have neither current nor outlet. For in order that a man may become strong physically, his food must be incorporated with his system, and assimilated to meet the demands of daily toil. And in order that man may reach the highest stage of spiritual development, there must be a hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and an actual participation in the divine life and strength. As the tendrils of the ivy cling around the old ruin, so must the powers of the soul go forth in quest of supernatural sustenance; for, as has been well said, unbelief is no longer regarded as a qualification for eminent saintship, nor doubt and distrust the evidences of a deep experience.

(b) We should be strong in maintaining and defending the faith. We live in an age of scepticism, when strenuous efforts are put forth to unsettle men's minds, and cast suspicion upon the most solemn questions that can engage the attention of immortal beings. The very word 'doctrine' in our day is repulsive. Sound theology is despised. Men who avow themselves as attached to no one creed more than another, are glorified and admired. Confessions of faith are regarded as superfluous, and those who value them, as behind the age. To charge any man with heresy or unsound views regarding the Atonement or inspiration of the Scriptures, is declared to be bigotry. Now whilst the enemies of religion are busy in dis-

seminating error, the friends of truth make but little effort to counteract their evil influence. Many are ashamed to be known as christians. In the presence of the profane and the ungodly, they acquiesce by their silence in the most blasphemous assaults against the truth. This moral cowardice is one of the greatest hindrances to the spread of godliness. The want of the church is aggressiveness. Timidity is the curse of the age. We speak in apologetic tones when called upon to defend God's word, and vindicate religion before the world. Not thus is the day to be hastened, when Christianity shall rule the globe, and sit enthroned in the hearts of millions! The darkness and prejudice of centuries will not pass away without a struggle, nor can our present privileges and liberties be retained but by the exercise of ceaseless vigilance and untiring zeal.

(c) Finally, we should be strong in our integrity, thoroughly candid and upright in all the transactions and avocations of life. Religion, to be of any value, should go into a man's business, and inspire his every professional act. More especially in times when fraud and dishonesty and falsehood are accounted but venial sins, and the most sacred moral obligations are violated without compunction, imperative necessity is laid upon every christian to maintain his truthfulness and honor stainless before the world. It is good to be orthodox and have a name and standing in the church, and be regular in our devotion, but it is wrong to allow our religion to be in advance of our morality and forget the obligations we owe to our fellow men. "The worst heresies that lay hold of the strength of the church, and tie her hands and paralyze her tongue, and poison her atmosphere, are lying, and stealing, and avarice, and selfishness." The old-fashioned form of speech, used half a century ago in denouncing villainy, is now wholly unknown. A forger is a speculator; a thief is a sharp, shrewd fellow; a man who fails in business, without enriching himself at the expense of his creditors, is called a fool. Fraud is reduced to a science. The end

—avaricious money-making—justifies the means ! Hence we have wheat corners, and gold corners, and bribery in high places. Every man for himself, is the cry of selfish humanity, while God looks down upon all such unhallowed traffic, and speedy vengeance follows. Assuredly if a man is going to lose his soul, he should have large returns in the present. The robber's gains need be great, for perpetual banishment from God's presence follows !

Now in this strength of the Lord, we are more than equal to all our adversaries, and more than able to cope with every form of temptation. With our loins girt about with the girdle of truth ; having on the breast plate of righteousness ; having our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace ; and in the strength of the most High, wielding the sword of the spirit, we need not go faint-hearted into the battle. Greater are they that are for us, than all that are against us. Thus the ruddy shepherd boy vanquished his great enemy. “ Thou comest to me with a sword and with a spear, and with a shield ; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.” And thus it ever is, when in God's strength we undertake to crush gigantic evils. “ Though hosts encamp against us, we need not fear. The Lord of Hosts is with us ; the Lord of Jacob is our refuge.”

The full possession of this strength is the work of years. Let none be discouraged, because they have not the boldness to do or to suffer all at once. The best graces are the longest in coming to maturity. The sunflower growing side by side with the sapling oak reaches perfection of growth and stature much sooner. The oak seems slow, compared with the ephemeral plant, that lives for a day. But if slow it is sure, and the results proportionate and permanent. And so by patient perseverance in well-doing the most diffident and unobtrusive may acquire firmness and fortitude. What unassisted human nature cannot accomplish, grace can, mak-

ing men more than conquerors. The strong men of the world are not always most conspicuous, they are often found among the poor and the weak ; having the least exterior power, they possess the most inward strength ; despised here, they wear crowns in heaven. If not great, as the world counts greatness, the humblest soul may be useful, becoming as the poet says :

A chalice of dew to the weary heart,
A sunbeam of joy bidding sorrow depart,
A beckoning hand to a far off goal,
An angel of love, to each friendless soul.*

I address many to-day* who stand upon the threshold of manhood, and are soon to go forth from these halls of learning to enter on the serious business of life. It is an intensely solemn moment. What words more appropriate than these : “ Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.” I trust I can add in the language of the beloved apostle John ; “ I speak unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.” God calls you because you are strong, to greater strength ; because you are wise, to greater wisdom ; because you are good to greater goodness—to help the weak by making them strong. Those characterized in the new Testament as young men were of military age, who, in times of war, became soldiers. To them the nation looked for defence against aggression. But young men ought to be the defenders of society against all forms of moral evil. The times in which your lot is cast ; the culture and mental training you have enjoyed, and the moral agencies that surround you, demand lives of noble aim and holy consecration.

The crisis presses on us, face to face with us it stands,
With solemn lips of question, like the sphinx in Egypt sands ;
This day we fashion destiny, the web of fate we spin,
This day for all hereafter, choose we holiness or sin ;

* Queens University, Kingston, 1883.

Even now from starry Gerizim, or Ebal's cloudy crown,
We call the dews of blessing, or the bolts of cursing down.

* * * * *

Decide not rashly. The decision made
Can never be recalled,
Choice and occasion, once being passed,
Return no more.

“Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.” Use your courage. Exercise your bravery. Purpose great things, and attain to them, in the strength of the Lord. God’s idea of manhood is purity of heart, conversation and action: an unobtrusive and unostentatious declaration of our principles in the face of opposition and obliquy. Many of the world’s greatest heroes possess this manliness, unknown and unpraised, for suffering in behalf of Christ in any form is truest manliness. I shall not attempt to answer the question, which many great minds are debating,—whether after all our efforts, virtue and truthfulness are keeping pace with the scholarship of the age. One thing I think is evident, that the rugged honesty and transparency of character of former days, when culture and refinement were not within the reach of the masses as they are to-day, are too seldom met with, even in our educated men. Most significant indeed is the statement, that a friend of Marquette College, Milwaukee, has given \$25 in gold to the Faculty, to be made into a medal “for the foremost student in manly piety.” Does not this seem to indicate a prevalent opinion, that learning when unsanctified is apt to lead away from, rather than to God: that many of our most promising students are ashamed to acknowledge Christ as a personal Saviour, and that our advanced thinkers shrink from boldly and unhesitatingly avowing their faith in a supreme being. It ought not to be so. It has not always been so. Our forefathers not only provided for the training of the intellect, in schools and colleges, but they held that no

one could do his duty to God and man, unless he lived a pious, honest, and truthful life. "That simple, noble creed were ill exchanged for the superficial accomplishments, which in some quarters pass for education. It made Scotland what it was, the home of civil and religious freedom ; it triumphed over the disadvantages of a rigorous climate and barren soil ; it sent young men of strong, robust, manly piety to all parts of the world, to earn honorable rewards in fame and fortune, and to make the blood of a Scotchman widely recognized, as in some measure a guarantee for integrity, for courage, intelligence and perseverance."

It is such men that this college and university is intended to furnish for important positions in church and state, and the moulding of our national life in its varied and complex relations. The aim of its founders, and the efforts of all who are now engaged, directly or indirectly, in its faculty or management, is to make men of broad, strong moral natures, who shall use their scholarship in advancing the highest forms of christian civilization :—men of symmetrical, well-balanced minds, incapable of being swayed by prejudice or moved by passion :—men complete and thoroughly equipped in a far higher sense than Horace ever conceived of, when describing such an one as self-reliant and regular, and even in his disposition and desires he says :

"In se ipso totus, teres, atque rotundus."

I am sure the Principal of this college is ready to endorse the language of one holding a similar office in the neighboring Republic when he says—describing the true functions and objects of such an institution : "Touching the inner life, the soul and spirit, the heart of a college, it should simply be christian in the grand catholic gospel acceptation of the term—no more, no less. The legend upon its banner should be, Religion and Learning ; Christ and Culture. In these two words is enfolded the essence of the earthly

and heavenly life—the elements of man's present duty and happiness, and his immortal destiny and glory. The one comprehends all that pertains to his spiritual nature, the other all that concerns him as a rational intelligent being. The one links him in blessed fellowship with the pure in heart, the other with the brotherhood of the wise and cultured. The one anchors the soul in rest and peace in the haven of faith, the other gives wings to knowledge of God through his works, and lifts the mind to mountain summits of contemplation. The one leads him forth to the fields of earthly lore, and art, and genius—to the fountains of eloquence, poetry and song ;—the other, into the green pastures and beside the still waters of the River of Life. The one plants his feet upon the immutable principia of the intellectual and physical universe ; the other sets them in everlasting security upon the Rock of Ages. The one brings the noble delights of mental conflicts and victories ; the other the grander triumph of a renewed life, and the ineffable blessedness of a soul at peace with God. The one adds beauty and radiance to life, the other brightens the dark valley of the shadow of death. Without culture a man is blind in a world of beauty, deaf in a world of song, insensible in a world of sublimity and pathos ; without religion he is a “lost pleiad,” a wandering star, out of his spiritual orbit, out of harmony with the rhythmic forces of the moral and spiritual universe, drifting alone in a sunless firmament.”

May all the graduates of this College be men of unflinching faith, lovers of truth, stainless in honor, pure in heart, patriotic for God and the right, for as the poet says—

To thine own self be true,
And it doth follow, as the night the day,
Thou can'st not then be false to any man.

Consecrated Work.

* “In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand : for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they shall both be alike good.”

—Ecclesiastes 11, v. 6.

“ Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might : for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest.”

—Ecclesiastes 9, v. 10.

* This and the following eight discourses were delivered to Graduating Classes of the Brantford Young Ladies' College.

CONSECRATED WORK.

HE man who uttered these words was, in his own estimation, very near the portals of the spirit world. None more than he had enjoyed life, or indulged in its pleasures. Wealth flowed into his treasury ; peace blessed his reign, and wisdom dignified his manhood. The civilized world acknowledged the might and majesty of King Solomon. Nor need we for a moment, in spite of his crimes and follies, deny how much his genius has blessed mankind. But when he stood almost within the shadows of the eternal world and realized the brevity of a life spent too largely in idle dreams and vanity ; when he thought how little good he had accomplished for the sake of humanity, with his vast stores of knowledge and his splendid opportunities—he closes the mournful retrospect by warning those who should succeed him to improve their every moment, and use their every talent. “In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand ; whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest.”

These two passages taken together may be regarded as an argument for earnestness and diligence in the prosecution of the commonest duties of life, as well as the higher studies of christian scholarship and christian attainments. They exhort to timely, continuous and consecrated work, because life at the longest is brief, and the day when labor ceases uncertain.

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand ; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper or whether they both shall be alike good." That is, do good when opportunity offers and when you may not see immediate results. Work industriously, morning and evening, early and late in life ; work on a generous scale ; work hopefully for both may prosper ; work trustfully, for thou knowest not the effect produced by any act. Under all conditions, walk by faith and not by sight. If the sowing of the morning fail, that of the evening may yield an abundant harvest.

Still, sowing in the morning is better than in the evening. Daylight is better than either twilight or darkness. Avail yourself of nature's aid. The mental powers are more vigorous in the morning, and more and better work can then be accomplished. The repose of the night refreshes and gives clearness to the brain and nerve to the muscle. The cares and gloom of the darkness give place to hope and courage. Unexpected hindrances may come before the evening, preventing the seed from being sown at all. Before the sun is high in the heavens work can be easier done, and the rest of noon is all the more enjoyable after the early labor of the dawn.

It has been well said that he who can master his early hours has won the battle of life. When the morning is lost the day is spoiled. When the first train is missed, the connections are missed. It is so with many lives. Having made a false start, or rather having delayed to start, they never came near the goal. They were

hopelessly distanced by less brilliant, but more plodding and persevering competitors.

Men regard this principle as true in common affairs. He who has a long and arduous journey before him, rises before the sun. The farmer in spring time, just as soon as the ground is free from frost, ploughs and sows. Every day counts ; the crops will be all the sooner ripe, and the ears of corn or wheat all the better filled, if the labor is attended to at the proper time.

Capital and riches are secured by industry, self-denial and prudence in the morning of life. They that bear the yoke in youth, can afford to rest in old age. Frivolity, recklessness, and even innocent pleasures, immoderately indulged in, are fatal to success. Moral ruin and social degradation follow such conduct. As every seed bears its own peculiar kind of fruit, so every thought and deed have their corresponding results. The rewards of the future are conditioned upon the conduct of the present. As duties are honestly discharged and honor and integrity maintained in early life, so will old age enjoy the respect and regard of men, the approval of conscience, and favor of God.

Many, however, act as if in manhood or womanhood, or even in old age, they could undo the evils of youth. But this never can be done. Grafting is not a very promising method for securing good fruit. Better to sow the pure seed, than attempt afterwards to weed out the tares and thistles. The tree not only lies where it falls, but it falls as it leans.

The foundations of eminence in science and letters must be laid in early life. Genius is but another name for industry. It has been well remarked that there is no man born so great that he can afford to be indolent. There is no man, though his head be as massive as Webster's, but needs to study and to ponder. There is no man, though he be endowed like Michael Angelo, but needs to be what he was—the most laborious man of his age. Though, like

Titian, one has all artistic taste, and lives to the age of one hundred years, it is not simply his genius, but the power with which he applies himself, that marks his talent and registers his usefulness. A man in life with one talent will be greatly useful if he knows how to keep that talent wisely employed ; but a man with ever so many talents will be of little use if he does not know how to employ them wisely. And this leads me to remark, that it is not only timely but continuous and consecrated work that is enjoined in the text. "Whatsoever thy hand findest to do, do it with thy might." Alexander the Great, on being asked how he had conquered the world, replied, "by not delaying." True greatness in secular callings is never attained without unflagging zeal. Men never accomplish anything sublime for humanity, without intense consecration of head and heart. Astronomers and men of science have been so absorbed in their speculations and calculations, as to neglect the wants of the body. The eye has been so transfixed on far-off objects, and the mind so filled with conceptions of the immensity and grandeur of the universe, that for the time being they are unconscious of the earthly and material. During the Crimean war, a newly arrived chaplain called upon a godly sergeant, and asked him as to how best he could conduct his work among the soldiers. "Come with me," said Hector MacPherson, the sergeant in question, "to the hill top. Now look around you. See yonder the pickets of Liprandi's army. See yon batteries on the right and the men at the guns. Mark yon trains of ammunition. Hear the roar of the cannon. Look where you may, it is all earnest here. There is not a man but feels it is a death struggle. If we don't conquer the Russians, the Russians will conquer us. We are all in earnest, sir ; we are not playing soldiers here. And if you would do good, you must be in earnest too !"

It is this doing with our might whatever our hand findest to do, that makes us achieve victories in the world of matter and mind

"Madam," said a great statesman to a princess, "if the thing is only difficult, it is done ; if it is impossible, it shall be done." This indomitable spirit that rises superior to obstacles and knows no defeat, is not always found, even among educated men and women. After having passed through a college course, they settle down to the lowest kind of routine life, and give no practical proof of the advantages they have enjoyed. Like the sea anemone, they hardly give tokens of intelligent action. They are but a bridge between matter and spirit. They contain the germs of immortality, but never rise above the lowest sensations. You shall find (says a living writer), in almost every neighborhood, men and women that have the admiration of all that know them, on account of their supposed capacity. It is said, "Why, here are men and women who know so much, that if they had a mind to, they could turn the world over. Their reasoning power, their genius, their ability is wonderful!" They live ten years, and it never drops out, and nobody sees it. They live ten years more, and yet it does not manifest itself. It is as if one should walk in a navy-yard, and seeing long rows of cannon, should say, "Oh ! what power there is in these cannon !" There would be great power in them if they were only fired ; but a cannon cannot be fired without powder, and somebody must put the powder in and touch it off. These men and women who are thought to have such capacity, but who never display it, are generally like artillery without powder. They have not enough animal power to propel the organization of the intellectual and moral sentiments ; and the consequence is that they are always making an impression of capacity, but never of efficiency."

Those whom I especially address are supposed to possess in some degree the knowledge and the wisdom that makes men and women useful and influential above the average of humanity. But without earnestness of purpose, gifts, whether natural or acquired, are of little value. Do with thy might whatever thy hand findeth

to do. Throw your whole soul into whatever you undertake, for success in any undertaking largely depends upon the spirit in which you engage in it. If we have little faith in its utility, if we are dragged into it reluctantly, and prosecute it mechanically, the results are sure to be insignificant, if not indeed, entire failure. Such is the meaning of the poet's words when he says :

The honest, earnest man must stand and work ;
The woman also, otherwise she drags
At once below the dignity of man,
Accepting serfdom. Free men freely work,
Whoever fears God fears to sit at ease.
True, after Adam, work was curse ;
The natural creature labors, sweats and frets,
But, after Christ, work turns to privilege,
And henceforth, one with our humanity,
The Six Day Worker, working still in us,
Has called us to work on with him
In high companionship.

But the text insists on continuous as well as consecrated work, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do." "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand." Says Isaiah "Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters." In order to do this, we ought not to be over fastidious or exacting as to this or that department of work, provided it is honest, and gives opportunity for self improvement and doing good to others. Some are never satisfied unless they can select their vocation. They prefer this or that kind of labor, they think their talents are only adapted to specific professions, and as there does not appear a present demand for the exercise of their special gifts, they remain indolent and inactive.

Now, it is not to be denied that in both secular and religious matters, work is the better and more speedily performed, if the different branches are prosecuted by men and women, skilful and facile in their different departments. This the Apostle Paul recog-

nizes in setting up the framework of the early churches. All the members of the one body have not the same office. There are gifts differing according to the grace given us, and whatever be our special gift or excellence, that we ought to exercise to the very utmost. But should there be no opening in that special department of labor for which we have been trained, and for which we think ourselves especially adapted, let us not reject other callings where we may perhaps not less successfully serve our fellow men and glorify the Master. When a soldier enlists in the army, he swears allegiance to his sovereign and prompt obedience to the orders of his commander. It is not for him to say where he will go; what enemy he will fight, or what place on the battlefield he will occupy. These details are arranged according to the exigencies of the case. He must go where he is sent, and endure whatever hardships are connected with the campaign, and resist though it should be unto death. And so it should be with every young christian. As regards our fields of labor, we should have little preference in their selection. We should lie submissively in the hands of Providence, going where he directs, and working as he appoints. No false pride nor desire of approbation should prevent us accepting the humblest stations. While ever seeking after higher attainments and qualifications, and cherishing an unselfish aspiration for nobler opportunities of usefulness, let us not wait idly until, as some say, "Providence opens the door." These are always open, if we had eyes to see them and willingness to enter.

Be not too proud to do anything God tells you to do. For the lack of a right disposition in this respect the world is strewn with wandering Hagar's and Ishmaels. God has given each one of us a work to do. You carry a scuttle of coal up that dark alley. You distribute that christian tract. You give \$10,000 to the missionary cause. You, for fifteen years, sit with chronic rheumatism, displaying the beauty of christian submission. Whatever God calls you

to do, whether it win hissing or huzza ; whether to walk under triumphal arch or lift the sot out of the ditch ; whether it be to preach on a Pentecost, or tell some wanderer of the street of the mercy of the Christ to Mary Magdalen ; whether it be to weave a garland for a laughing child on a spring morning, and call her a May queen, or to comb out the tangled locks of a waif of the street, and cut up one of your old dresses to fit her out for the sanctuary —do it, and do it right away. Whether it be a crown or a yoke, do not fidget. Everlasting honors upon those who do their work and do their whole work, and are contented in the sphere in which God has put them.

Notice finally the reason given why we should thus work with all our might. “There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave.”

Our hearts though stout and brave,
Still like muffled drums are beating,
Funeral marches to the grave.

At death our opportunities for usefulness in this state are at an end. The record is then finished—the account closed—the history written up. Nothing can be added and nothing can be changed.

The fact of our mortality seldom distresses us. We act as if we had a special immortality. This is specially true of the young. Nor is it strange that it should be so. And yet how often are we summoned to the deathbed of the young ! One graduate and several students of this college in former years have been called away during the past few months on the very threshold of what seemed happy and useful lives. Such unexpected calls ought to make us work with unwonted zeal. The brevity of life at its longest should intensify our appreciation of opportunities for serving man and honoring God. No labor should be regarded as irksome—no burden too heavy to carry. Every moment should be occupied—every faculty disciplined, and every occasion turned to the best account.

This is a scene of activity—not of rest ; a battlefield where victory belongs to the most courageous ; a school of training, where the industrious student gains the prize. The deathbed is sweet when filled with memories of patient work and bright anticipations of angelic greetings in the deathless land beyond the grave.

How sad have been the closing hours of men of genius and intellect, who never seem to have realized the end for which they were born into the world, until they were ready to go out of it. Lord Chesterfield at the close of his life said : “ I have recently read Solomon with a kind of sympathetic feeling. I have been as wicked and vain, though not so wise as he, but now I am old enough to feel the truth of his reflection, ‘ all is vanity and vexation of spirit.’ ” La Fontaine, the poet, after his wild excesses and partial reform, wrote to a friend : “ To die is nothing ; but do you know that I must appear before God ? You are aware how I lived. Ere you receive this note, the gates of eternity will perhaps have opened for me.” Said Napoleon towards the close of his wonderful career : “ Why did the cannon ball spare me to die in this manner ? How fallen I am. I was Napoleon—now I am no longer anything. Said the guilty Borgia : I have provided in the course of my life for everything, except death; and now, alas, I am to die, although wholly unprepared.” How different the closing hours of those who have been honored in saving souls ? Said Norman McLeod, a little while before his departure : “ I am an old man, and have passed through many experiences, but now all is perfect calm and perfect peace. I have glimpses of heaven that no tongue, nor pen, nor words can describe.” Said Duncan Mathieson, the Scottish evangelist who literally wore out his physical frame in the cause of his Master, “ Victory ! Victory ! Jesus only. This room is filled with the heavenly host.” And as night came on—the last brief period of darkness to him for ever—he cried out “ Light all the lights, and let not this be a charnel house. How is

it the King tarries when the chariot wheels are so near? Lord Jesus, come quickly! Oh, come quickly."

The end of a college course is not, I trust, the end of study to many of you, but to all it is the beginning of existence on a larger scale than that which you have experienced in the past. I charge you to give your earliest and best days to God. Let your life motto be—"Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." Be eminent scholars and brilliant artists if you will, but above all else, be great in goodness and sanctified attainments. Piety adorns every walk in life, and gives to its close a grandeur and glory that mere scholarship never can confer. As no one can become a proficient in any calling, without earnest and prolonged effort, so no one can reach high altitudes in God's kingdom without prayers and pains. Those who seek after an incorruptible crown, must possess an enthusiasm and courage that will equal—nay, surpass—that which has characterized their secular endeavors. Lukewarmness is out of place in religious matters. Those only who are in earnest can achieve anything of value to humanity. Inspired with a supernatural power, they overcome obstacles. The world may call them eccentric and singular, but it is a glorious singularity to live in the presence of the invisible, disdaining earth, honor, pleasures and pastimes, that degrade the moral nature. What to such are the petty concerns and troubles of the present—the downfall of empires and the destruction of thrones? They are working for the advancement of a kingdom that shall never be moved, and a seat of honor higher and more stable than that of earthly kings.

I address for the last time not a few who, it is to be hoped, have such an ideal character before them, towards which they will aspire with all the energies of their being. The time has come to say farewell. Some who for years have taken part with us in the service of this sanctuary, go hence to return no more. Pleasure and pain commingle in the thought. To leave companions and teach-

ers is trying, to enter upon the dignity of womanhood is full of joyful anticipation. While I would not unduly cloud the bright prospect that lies before them in the future, we cannot forget that soon the realities of life, with its sad memories of the past, will succeed the bright dreams of youth, when the touching lines of the poet will fitly describe their feelings :

Those college days ! I ne'er shall see t' o like !
 I had not buried then so many hopes !
 I had not buried then so many friends !
 I've turned my back on what was then before me ;
 And the bright faces of my young companions
 Are wrinkled like my own, or are no more.

There comes a time, no matter how prosperous and honored the life, when the heart yearns for something more enduring than human friendships ; when like old Bazillai, pressed by King David to make his home in the palace at Jerusalem, we feel that our strongest attachments lie beyond the grave. " How long have I to live, that I should go up with the King unto Jerusalem ? I am this day fourscore years old, and can I discern between good and evil ? Can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink ? Can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women ? Wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my Lord the King ? " Happy are the graduates of this college, who having been spared to such a green old age, shall be able to say :

O God ! who wert my childhood's love,
 My girlhood's pure delight ;
 A presence felt the live long day,
 A welcome fear at night.

With age Thou growest more divine,
 More glorious than before ;
 I feared Thee with a deeper fear,
 Because I loved Thee more.

Apart from your scholastic attainments, I follow you with tender interest in your journey through life. I cannot but feel that to many of you my preaching has been the savor of life unto life, or death unto death. I hope to have all of you as seals of my ministry in glory. The teacher has for his great aim to make scholars of his pupils ; the minister to make christians. The one educates the mind, the other moulds the soul. I have served in both capacities in the college, but I need hardly say that I have ever regarded the latter as the most important part of my work. Many of the graduates of the present year have under my ministry made public profession of Christ. Several of them are the daughters of esteemed brethren in the ministry and eldership of the church, whose fellowship for many years I have enjoyed. Need I say, that I regard you with very tender feelings, and that I entertain very high hopes of your future career. My greatest joy will be to know that you have honored the college where you have been educated, and the church with which you have been so long identified. In order to this it is needful that your character should bear the inspection not only of companions, but also of the society in which you shall be called to mingle in riper years. The great want of the age is men and women who are not ashamed of their church membership, and whose every act is consistent with their profession ; who live as in the presence of the Eternal, and as accountable to a higher tribunal than human law ; who walk with God, commune with heaven, and make religion real and practical in the sight of men. Not a few of you, I am glad to know, have been accustomed to meet for social prayer within the college walls. Although soon to be separated, you need not forego the privilege of communion with each other. Spirits can meet and blend at a common mercy seat, though far apart, and feel the sympathy of kindred souls. The memory of such precious hours spent together should have a solemnizing and inspiring influence upon you. Of such as have thus secretly given

themselves to God, a high and holy consecration is expected. While cheerful, hopeful and helpful, they ought none the less to be sober, earnest and serious—mindful of their origin and destiny. The prayer of each should be :

Make me feel
 That in the gay and care-forgetting crowd
 Thou art as near me as in solitude.
 Keep Thou the portals of my lips, lest words
 Of levity, or censure undeserved
 Abuse the freedom of my mirthful hours,
 Tinge my each word and action with the hue
 Of heart-born courage and holy love ;
 That in the use of every social gift
 The happiness of others may be mine.

Or as another sweet singer has put it :

Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever ;
 Do noble things, not dream them, all day long ;
 And so make life, death, and the vast forever
 One grand sweet song.

“ I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, who is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.”





The Pattern Worker.

“I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work.”

—John 9, v. 4.

The Pattern Worker.

T HAS been, and is still, too much the custom to regard labor as a curse. Because after man's fall the decree went forth, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the ground," it has been falsely concluded that labor, whether of the body or the mind, is a mark of social degradation, and that it is lawful, if not indeed praiseworthy, to escape its burdens. That such an interpretation of the passage is opposed to the teachings of philosophy and the experience of life, it is not difficult to show. It is very true that the conditions of existence have been changed in some respects since the fall, but we can conceive of no situation in life that does not afford suitable and profitable employment for rational beings. Had Adam retained his holiness, doubtless he and his posterity would have had their daily allotted tasks—not perhaps so exhausting and laborious as are the average employments of a sinful race, but not less continuous. To live without the performance of stated duties would be the most miserable of all possible conditions of existence. Body and mind, from what we know of their constitution, demand regular exercise, and only in so far as they conform to this

great law, do they minister to human happiness, and fill up the grand design of their Creator.

Jesus Christ himself was a life long worker. His sinless humanity was not exempted from daily toil. He became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, not simply as regards the finer sensibilities of our nature, but in respect to the humblest and most exhausting toils of mechanical life. In early years he bore the yoke of service, and in riper manhood he cheerfully discharged the obligations that appertain to the commonest avocations of life. His example thus stands before us for imitation. Let no man nor woman despise work of any kind, if it is pure and honorable and honest. The real nobility of man is determined, not by the material with which he is employed, but by the manner in which he executes his work. Angels work, and the redeemed in heaven work. It is the law of the universe, and inseparable from rational existence :

He only is the truly great,
The only truly rich is he.
Whose wealth is in his mind's estate,
And child of God his pedigree.

This great truth is brought before us in the text. The Saviour looks with compassion upon a poor blind man, who is soon,—and for the first time to behold the light of day. In answer to one of those profitless questions, that the disciples so frequently put to the master, Christ declares the great end of his mission to the world. “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day ; the night cometh when no man can work.”

Notice first, that Christ was sent by his Father into the world. Long before his advent, he was spoken of as the servant of his Father. “Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me : I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea thy law is within my heart.” The position of a servant he regarded as honorable. “My

meat," he says, "is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." To inculcate the duty and value of the humblest ministrations for the good of others, he washed the feet of the disciples, saying: "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet." And the apostle, when contrasting his earthly humiliation with his exalted glory, says: "He took on him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Service in itself is never degrading. To work for the benefit of another may be as noble an occupation as to wield a sceptre or command an army. Everything depends upon the character of the master we serve, the nature of the service demanded, and the value of the reward. So long as the world lasts, and society maintains its present order, there must be gradations; those who command and those who obey; those who plan and those who execute. Any theory that attempts to change this divine arrangement, attempts simply what is impossible. What God has determined for the welfare of his creatures, let no man dare to alter.

Our conception of the grandeur of voluntary service will appear still clearer, if we imagine a case where the master has become the servant. It is seldom that a man is found, born to a noble position in life, who willingly resigns an exalted station, and cheerfully becomes the inferior of another, for any purpose whatever. Such a case is, however, supposable. A man of royal rank and destiny may for the welfare of his country and the highest interests of his fellow-men, renounce the sceptre and the coronet, and condescend to the humblest avocations of the subject. In such a case, there is cause for the highest admiration. There is conferred upon such a servant a far greater glory than could possibly belong to a sovereign.

Now, this is what has been verified in the life of Jesus Christ. Creator of worlds, supreme ruler of the universe and all the hosts of heaven, adored and beloved by the highest and purest intelligences, He stooped from his lofty throne, laid aside the insignia of his power and bowed to his Father's will, that he might carry out the purposes of redemption toward guilty man. Not reluctantly, not as forced or constrained to obey the behests of duty, nor as if the change involved what men call social degradation and obscurity, but cheerfully, spontaneously and eagerly did Christ become the servant of heaven and its ambassador to a ruined world. And never did greater glory surround the mercy seat than when the incarnate God left for a time the place of honor at his Father's right hand to tabernacle among weak and wicked men. Service has thus been made honorable. By so much the more as it is difficult for human nature to serve than rule, is the servant above the master. As old George Herbert says :

Teach me, my God and King,
In all things thee to see ;
And what I do in anything
To do it as for Thee.

A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine ;
Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws,
Makes that and the action fine.

Such considerations were doubtless present to the mind of the Apostle Paul, when writing to the members of the Apostolic churches. He speaks of himself and his brethren, as servants and co-workers in the faith, as if these were the noblest of all designations. "Paul a servant of Jesus Christ," "Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church;" "Let a man so account of us, as the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God;" "As ambassadors for Christ, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

Whatever then may be our social differences, we are all servants. One is our master, even Christ, and all we are brethren. As such, by mutual sympathy and by faithful efforts in the departments of labor appointed us, we are to glorify the Master. In the church of Christ the peer and the peasant, the rich and the poor, the king and the subject, stand upon an equality, and shall all alike be judged by the same unerring standard. We need to be reminded of this from time to time. The same spirit of unholy ambition that manifested itself occasionally in the disciples, still exists more or less in the hearts of professing christians. Prosperous in business, successful in study, and more or less conspicuous in the eyes of the world for our benevolence and meritorious acts, we are apt to forget that we are at best only servants. Our time is not our own, the results of our labor are not our own. To each there is given the command, "occupy till I come." "Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching. Verily, I say unto you, that he shall gird himself and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them."

Notice, secondly, that Christ was sent to work his Father's work. He came into this world for a specified object, and with a definite purpose in view, and with a perfect knowledge of what his mission was intended to accomplish. That work may be looked at in different aspects, as passive and active, as suffering and doing. The consummation of his life's work, was his death. Without this, all that preceded would have been vain. Toward this all was directed, and by this his divinity and the infinite value of his work was proved.

The life of Christ while on earth was a busy one. Even regarded from a human standpoint, how constant were his efforts in behalf of humanity! Read the record of labor performed during the three years of his active ministry—the diverse and exhausting toils pressed together hour after hour, from early dawn until far

into the shadows and darkness of the night, and where can we find its equal among the busiest of the sons of men? No call of mercy was ever disregarded. Now preaching the gospel to thousands upon the mountain side, or gathered by the sea of Galilee ; now instructing the disciples in the things of the kingdom ; now working miracles in attestation of his Messiahship and the truths of christianity ; opening the eyes of the blind, curing the infirm and paralyzed, and raising the dead to life ; and again seated in the home of poverty and sorrow, comforting the bereaved and binding up the broken in heart. Often indeed the physical nature of the Saviour was exhausted. The body, under the pressure of almost superhuman anxieties and burdens, became fatigued, but the soul maintained its wakefulness and vigor. You remember how that on one occasion, wearied with the toils of the day, he must needs cross to the other side of the Lake of Gennesaret in order to cure a man afflicted with an unclean spirit, whose dwelling was among the tombs ; and how that as he lay fast asleep in the hinder part of the vessel, he was awakened by the terror-stricken disciples, who cried out, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" Although his presence in the little boat should of itself have assured the disciples of safety, he murmurs not that his slumbers have been disturbed. At once he rebukes the wind, and says to the sea, " Peace be still," and then tenderly rebukes their lack of faith that produced such unnecessary fear. What matchless patience, tenderness and love!

Under such a pressure of bodily and mental anxiety, what supported the humanity of Christ? Just what sustains the most eminent servants of God at the present day. Reading the biographies of such men, we wonder at their achievements ; how they plan, project and accomplish innumerable schemes for the well-being of their fellow-men. Weak in physical organization, oftentimes they surpass in endurance the strongest and most robust frames. We account for this by their nervous temperament, their impulsiveness,

and their singular adaptation to the many details of christian life. But these are but secondary causes, and in themselves wholly inadequate to produce such results. They are simply to the man what the machinery is to the steam engine. Before motion can be reached and the wheels begin to revolve, steam power must be applied. And so without constant communion from heaven no man can be an active christian worker. Christ while on earth spent whole nights in prayer. By this he was refreshed, strengthened and comforted, amid all his discouragements and trials.

The work set before him was far from inviting. Yet he shrank not from it. To be adjudged as responsible for the sins of others, to be treated as a malefactor when personally innocent, to bear pain and shame of death, and the wrath of an angry God, presents us with an accumulation of woe beyond mortal conception or endurance. There were indeed periods in his existence—especially towards its close---when his human nature seemed to stagger under desperate encounters with the powers of hell. But these were but for a moment. With a fortitude and heroism altogether unexampled in the history of martyrdom, He drank the bitter cup, and finished the work given him to do. No marvel that nature, at the sight of such superhuman sufferings, shook to her very foundations ; that the quaking earth, and rending rocks, and opening graves, and darkening sun, attested the magnitude of the work, and thus significantly announced the reconciliation of man to God, and earth to heaven.

Notice, thirdly, that the work given Christ was to be completed in a given time. It is called in the text “a day.” The period was brief, as indeed the entire life of Christ on earth was short. The brevity of his mortal existence pressed itself upon the mind of Christ frequently. There was no time for rest or leisure ; for the lighter and more congenial occupations of the day ; for the philosophic and speculative discussions of the schools. The burden of

immortal souls weighed him down. He was straightened in spirit, until his work was accomplished. The joy set before him also increased his earnestness. He looked forward to the moment of victory, when having trodden the wine press, he should receive the welcome of his Father, and through ranks of shining angels pass on to the mediatorial throne, and when in myriads of redeemed and glorified ones, He should see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

And now, by way of application, let me add that each man and woman has been sent into the world to work the works of God. No one can relinquish his moral obligations. Those especially who have accepted Christ as their Saviour, are under the strongest obligations to render Him efficient service. The time for work is short. We are passing rapidly to the grave. The day will soon end, and the night close in upon our labor. Now is the time to exercise all those God-given faculties with which we have been endowed in behalf of the sinful and the sorrowing. Living such useful and unselfish lives, our dying moments shall be peaceful and our future rest glorious.

There is much talk in the present day of overwork. Men unduly tax the brain and draw upon the vital resources of life, and strain their energies beyond the limits of safety and moderation, and fall in the prime of life victims to over anxiety and care and inordinate ambition. But how seldom do we read of men and women over taxing their powers for the good of humanity, and wearing out their lives in the service of God? Is it not true that many professing christians hardly acknowledge Christ's claims upon their time and service? They are, as has been said, capital soldiers on parade days, but are not worth a rush before the cannon's mouth. They are loud in profession before a battle, and loud in exultation after a victory, but during the fight they are always missing. Such a state of things is wrong. Christians should be the most indus-

trious of men and women. Religion, so far from paralyzing effort, should increase it. From the moment of consecration there should be intelligent and continuous service. The christian worker should be a model hero, and should never dream of defeat. Through faith, he can appropriate infinite wisdom and almighty strength for every emergency. History tells us, that among the prisoners at Waterloo, there was a Highland piper. Napoleon asked him to play a pibroch, and the Highlander played. "Play a march," said Napoleon, and he played it. "Play a retreat," again said the French General. "No, no," said the Highlander, "I never learned to play a retreat!" And so in working for God, we should never dream of defeat or disaster. Repulses in the christian life will meet us, and obstacles test our courage, but with God upon our side we are sure of victory.

The night is coming to all of us—how soon we cannot tell. All men admit the certainty of death and the shortness of life, but it is only when we compare the fondly cherished hopes and plans of early years, with the small amount of actual work accomplished, that we realize its exceeding brevity. The longest life seems altogether too short to do anything worthy of immortality. In the morning of existence we promise ourselves noble achievements. Splendid visions of the future dawn upon the soul. After a long and busy life, we expect our own sun to set in a halo of glory, every expectation realized and every purpose completed. But how sad in most cases is the retrospect! Cut down in the very middle of life, when we are just beginning to see the result of our labors, we ask why life is such a failure? Or, as the poet says:

A walking shadow ; a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more. * * * A tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Such, indeed, is life to the man or woman who has lived simply for its pleasures and unsubstantial honors. But it is not to those who make work for God a daily and hourly task. Measured by years and public notoriety, it may seem brief, fragmentary and uneventful, but judged by its far-reaching results, it is as enduring as eternity.

Happy the man, and happy he alone,
He who can call to-day his own ;
He who secure within, can say,
To-morrow do thy worst, for I have lived to-day.

How rapidly the years seem to glide as we approach the end. Silently but surely, like the continuous ticking of the clock that measures moments, and minutes, and hours, and days, and weeks, and finally comes to the last minute, when the pendulum swings irresolutely and unsteadily, and then ceases to swing at all, so is the life of man ! Just as we pass milestone after milestone on the railway, one after another in rapid succession, so do we rush on from childhood to youth, from youth to manhood and womanhood, and thence to the grave. It is not till time with reckless hand has torn out half the leaves from the book of human life, to light the fires of passion with, that we begin to see that the leaves that remain are few in number. But however few remain, let them not increase the accusations of a reproachful memory. Let us live lives that shall be earnest of that prolonged immortality that awaits the faithful toilers upon earth. "Dead he is not, but departed," should be the inscription on our grave stone :

"Non abit, sed emigravit" the tombstone read,
And 'neath it lay a hero dead,
Who had fallen, fallen like a star
In the summer sky, that darts afar
Its golden ray of mellow light,
O'er the tresses of the queenly night.

Oh, if you but knew the luxury of working for God and living to purpose, there would be no need of inviting you to engage in

christian work. The aimless, irresolute lives, that many young people lead, bring no satisfaction. Capacities and opportunities undeveloped and unimproved, make old age a sad retrospect, and render death unwelcome. If we do not serve here, we can neither serve nor reign hereafter. The joy of the heavenly ministry is theirs, who have labored in lonely and forbidding fields on earth, for

If sweet below
To minister to those whom God doth love,
What will it be to minister above?
 His praise to show,
In some new strain amid the ransomed choir,
To touch their joy and love with notes of living fire.

Such thoughts I deem not altogether inappropriate, when addressing a goodly number of young women, who having completed a college course, are about to leave, in many cases never to return. I exhort such to engage in some department of christian work.

Rest not! Life is sweeping by;
Go and dare before you die;
Something mighty and sublime
Leave behind to conquer time.
Glorious 'tis to live for aye,
When the forms have passed away.

A Ladies' College graduate is often spoken of as one who has "finished her education," A recent writer says—although his remarks do not, I trust, apply to Canadian college graduates:—"She has passed the usual examinations, has received the diploma of average excellence, and is now permitted to go forth untrammeled and free, to do as she chooses in the great social world that seems so inviting. She understands the French phrases in the last society novel, and so she has finished the modern languages. She can play a dozen set pieces on the piano, if she has her notes, and is not out of practice; so she has finished her musical education. She has

brought home in her trunk half a dozen crayon copies from pictures given her by her master, and after he has gone over them and touched them up, they present a very respectable appearance ; so she is a finished artist. She has read the First Book of Milton's 'Paradise Lost,' and parsed most of it ; so she has finished English literature. She can rattle off the names of the crowned heads of England, and knows that William the Conqueror won the battle of Hastings, that Henry VIII. was not a model husband, and that Charles I. was beheaded by Cromwell ; so she has finished English history. She has committed to memory the greater part of Butler's 'Analogy,' and recited it ; so she is finished in Moral Philosophy."

"Finished!" Yes, literally so, for when a young woman imagines that her education is completed on leaving college, there is little more to be expected from her, however long her life and manifold her advantages. Do I speak uncharitably when I say that many graduates of ladies' colleges spend the best days of their lives, if not in abject idleness, in frivolous amusements, doing nothing worthy of their training and opportunities, and taking no part in the practical duties and cares of life? Their brothers are roused at an early hour to attend to business, but the sisters having nothing particularly to do, make their appearance some hours later, and seek in the merest trifles to pass the day. Thus they grow up indolent, selfish and conceited, fonder of personal adornments and luxuries than industry, frugality, and the simplicities of life, which are the true adornments of cultivated christian womanhood.

I counsel you to lead entirely different lives. If as in the case of many, abstruse studies are now ended, begin to work for God. Let your lives be devoted to tender and loving ministrations, not only in your own homes, but far beyond. It is not necessary that you should go to heathen lands to find scope for christian activity and self-denial. Opportunities lie all around you, and in proportion to the work accomplished here, shall be the joy of heaven.

Above, beyond the starry vault of heaven,
Will a great God reward you.

It has been well said that while society praises the adept in small talk, the world will remember only those who by cultivated intellect and purified hearts, have assisted mankind and helped to make the world better. We always think kindly of Florence Nightingale, who by her unselfish devotion to the sick and wounded in the Crimea, made her name a household word ; of Harriet Hosmer, who, finding that she possessed talent, developed it and became the best modeller in clay and sculptor in marble known in the history of our country ; of Harriet Beecher Stowe, whose book before it was a year old was translated into all languages, and proved an important factor in the emancipation of slavery, and hastened to uplift the whole continent to a broader and more charitable eminence ; and the wife of Sir John Franklin, who, lying upon what proved to be her death-bed, bade her husband depart on his voyage to the North Pole. Such women as these are spoken of after the beauties of the world are forgotten.

I read recently of a dream that a young lady once had that impressed me much, and with that I close this sermon, leaving you to make the application. She was a good girl and a member of a christian church. She dreamed that she died and went to heaven, and that she was carried beyond all the bounds of imagination into the beauties and glories of the world up yonder. She dreamed that she was at home in the city of God, and that she was there to live evermore ; that she had passed to the judgment bar of God, and that she had become crystalized in holiness, to be forever a child of God, in the city of God, and she said : "O, what ecstacies swept over my soul as I dreamed of the bliss of heaven ! All at once, we were standing around God, the Father of us all, and were singing, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches' and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.

Over the brilliant and blazing countenances as they shone forth, I saw ten thousand diadems shining in the crowns of those around me, and I turned to a sister spirit and said, 'What do these diadems represent in these crowns?' 'Oh,' she said, 'these represent souls that we have been enabled to win to Christ.' I pulled off my crown and looked at it, and it was as black as night, and I began to be miserable in heaven, and in a few minutes I opened my eyes, and I said, 'Glory to God, if I have a few more years I will spend the residue of them doing service for Christ, and I will get my recognition in heaven in the sweet by and by.' "



Polished Corner Stones.

“That our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace.”

—Psalm 144, v. 12.

POLISHED CORNER STONES.



avid in this psalm is praying for the highest prosperity of the nation. Material riches in his estimation are of secondary importance. Where mental cultivation and moral purity are wanting, they are dangerous to the state. The garners may be full and overflowing with the products of a bountiful harvest, and the cattle may be numbered by the tens of thousands, and all the elements of commercial greatness possessed, but unless "our sons grow up in their youth as plants," vigorous, virtuous, and ripe for the duties of life, and unless our daughters are "as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace," decay and ruin will eventually overtake the nation.

The figure in the text is that of a building not only strong, massive and imposing, and having good foundations, but fair in its proportions and pleasing to the eye. A building upon which the skill of the architect and sculptor has been lavished, and in which polished corner stones, set in conspicuous places, add much to the effect. The word denotes more than polished. It is cut—hewn—carved after the similitude of a palace or a temple. In all likelihood there is no allusion to the costly materials then in preparation

for the building of the temple. No labor or expense was grudged to make the sanctuary surpassingly beautiful and attractive. And what the earved stones and sculptured pillars were to the temple, so are accomplished and virtuous women to society. Christian culture has for its object, not simply the imparting of knowledge and the exercise of the judgment, but the refining and polishing of the entire person—the development of head and heart, and all that makes character winsome and conduct praiseworthy.

The larger proportion of our young women can never go beyond the common school ; nor can there be any better training for the ordinary work of life. Those who advance no further are none the less honorable and useful members of society. Often, indeed, by sheer force of natural abilities and strength of will, they secure for themselves positions of honor beyond more favored rivals. But it is equally imperative that there should be a goodly number whose education has been carried on to a further limit, and who, in virtue of their more favored circumstances, will give tone to society and confer honor upon their sex, and become, in certain departments, the ruling spirits of the age. The true queens of society are women of christian culture. They may not sit upon thrones and sway material sceptres, but their power and influence far surpass that which is merely inherited by noble birth and pedigree. Not within their own household merely do such women reign, but over all who come within the range of their sphere of action. They may not exercise their gifts in the rough, open world, where oft-times the strongest are worsted and repulsed ; but wherever counsel, decision, penetration and kindly sympathy are needed, they are never found wanting. Theirs is the power to heal, to succor, to guide and to guard. A gifted female writer of the present century, describes Christianity as making a circuit of the earth in the guise of a young maiden. She enters the hovels of the poor, and gives cheery words and sunny smiles to the weary burdened sons of toil.

Through great cities and humble villages alike she makes her way
leaving behind a blessing.

And ever as she went along
Sweet flowers sprang 'neath her feet ;
All flowers that were most beautiful,
Of virtues strong and sweet.

And ever as she went along
The desert beasts grew tame ;
And man, the savage, dyed with blood,
The merciful became.

Sometimes within the baron's hall,
A lodging she would find ;
And never went she from the door,
But blessings stayed behind.

Such are the women the age and country demand, and the means to secure them is the training of the home and the culture of the Christian college. Blessed is the nation which possesses such daughters, and happy is that people whose God is the Lord.

For thus speaking of the influence that Christian women exert upon society, women adorned with all the solid accomplishments that schools can give, and souls savingly touched with sovereign grace, we by no means advocate that superficial, showy, and fashionable education, which has too long been common in certain quarters, and is still coveted by fond and foolish mothers for their daughters. It requires months and years of labor before the polished stone and fluted column stand out before the admiring gaze. It also requires good material to receive a lasting polish. A good foundation, embracing English literature, the sciences and mathematical studies, are necessary to further accomplishments. These branches are common to the individual man or woman. But the peculiar character, relations and work of women, demand in some respect a different training from that of men. Not from any belief that intellectually they are inferior, and therefore unable to contend in the same arena, do we argue the necessity of separate schools or

colleges, but because a special culture seems more in keeping with their gentler nature. The influences which a cultivated woman exerts, while as potent as those of man, are more noiseless and unobtrusive. Her power is not in words, but deeds. She constrains and moulds, not so much by direct force of character, as by a gentle persuasion that captivates and subdues the strongest spirits. Superadded to the ordinary branches which every youth should possess, there are certain studies and pursuits which seem peculiarly her own, and which give her in every station of life an enviable supremacy and an attractive gracefulness which can hardly be described. Who has not felt the charms of Christian womanhood thus adorned? With an ear for the harmony of sound and the touch of a fairy hand; an eye for the lights and shadows of the ever changing landscape, and a pencil facile in execution; with a keen penetration that discovers the secrets of nature, and minutely detects in every leaflet and wild flower the marvellous design and infinite skill of the great Creator! Such accomplishments and mental culture are quite compatible with the retiring virtues and unassuming necessity of the sex and command respect. "Before the myrtle crown and stainless sceptre of true womanhood the world will ever bow."

To possess the attainments spoken of, and at the same time be guiltless of conscious superiority over less fortunate companions, is not often found. There is an air of affectation which too frequently accompanies cultured woman that greatly detracts from simplicity of character. Genius, in its highest conditions, shows personal notoriety, and shrinks from vulgar criticism. You have heard of the Grecian painter Zeuxis, who in painting his Helen, sought to embody in the face the ideal of perfect beauty. He sent to Crotona, famous for its handsome women, for six maidens, from the combinations of whose charms he hoped to secure perfection of feature and expression; but one of the six could not be prevailed upon to

unveil her face, so sensitive was she of the gaze of strangers. When the picture was finished it called forth the rapt admiration of the people ; but the painter himself was dissatisfied. He felt that one charm of the picture was wanting, and exclaimed, "Oh, for the blush of the sixth maiden !" And how often do we feel as did the painter, when we see women of great personal attractions, and exceptional culture, patronizing their humbler sisters with an air of condescension that proves the existence of secret pride, and an undue regard for what are, after all, not the essentials, but the adornments of female character. It is said of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, whose writings are known in every land, but whose books fall far short of the goodness of her heart, that she was shy with strangers, and utterly unconscious of her almost matchless genius that gave her a world-wide fame. That woman, of whom it has been said that she never made an insignificant remark, "was a most patient, conscientious listener to others, giving you her mind and heart, as well as her magnetic eyes. Persons were never her theme, unless public characters were under discussion, or friends were to be praised. Yourself—not herself—was always a pleasant subject to her, calling out all her best sympathies in joy, and yet more in sorrow." Of such an one, in her own well-known lines, we may say :

She was not as pretty as women we know,
And yet all your best made of sunshine and snow
Drop to shade, melt to naught in the long-trodden warp,
While shé's still remembered.

She never found fault with you, never implied
You wrong by her right, and yet men at her side
Grew nobler, girls purer, as through the whole town,
The children were gladder, that pulled at her gown.

The weak and the gentle, the ribald and rude,
She took as she found them, and did them all good ;
It was always so with her, see what you have !
She has made the grass greener, even here, with her grave.

Such a woman, crowned with the green laurels of her countrymen, and illustrious alike for her learning, her sweetness of temper, tenderness of heart and depth of feeling, making up a beautiful and fragrant life the world will not soon forget.

Her works and alms, and all her good endeavours,
Staid not behind, nor in the grave were trod.

To live such lives of usefulness and unobtrusive moral worth is within the reach of all. The title of "lady" or "gentlewoman," that once belonged exclusively to aristocracy, has now a much wider meaning. The word "lady" means a "bread giver," or loaf giver—one who distributes to the multitude and helps suffering humanity; not one who, as in olden times, was followed by a train of vassals, to serve and favor and flatter, but whose benignant smile and gracious deportment compel the homage of the great and the benedictions of the poor. True nobility of nature stoops to the humblest vocations. Royalty is never so exalted as when it deigns to succor the disconsolate and comfort the sorrowing. Not long ago there was laid in Westminster Abbey all that was mortal of one who gave dignity to high born rank, one who was followed to the grave by the tears and lamentations alike of Queen Victoria and the meanest of her subjects—Lady Augusta Stanley. It is related of her that a few years ago, when the Westminster Hospital gathered its nurses whence and as it could, a poor woman, suffering from an acute and dangerous disorder, was admitted as a patient, and on her sick bed was succored and comforted by Lady Stanley, who was a frequent visitor to the hospital. In a sudden crisis after malady, it was decided by the physicians that the only means of saving life was by an immediate and terrible operation. The choice was submitted to her of certain death or this fearful passage to recovery. The poor woman shrank at first from even life at such a price; then, trembling, she said:—"I think if Lady Stanley were but with me, I could go through it." In haste a messenger was

sent to the deanery, where Lady Augusta was found dressed, in readiness to fulfil an engagement at Buckingham Palace. Without a moment's notice, she wrapped a cloak over her magnificent attire, and went straight to the hospital. When Christ called her, in the person of His suffering poor, then royalty itself must wait. She stayed with the poor, tortured woman, nerving her to endurance by the strength of her sympathy and presence, until the surgeon's work was ended and rest had come ; and then from the hospital ward went to the palace, to apologize to the Queen for her late appearance.

I think I can enter into your feelings as you come near the hour of parting from teachers and companions. You have looked forward with longing desire to the day, when, having honorably completed your studies, you should go forth with the seal of our approval and the rewards of honest toil. But now, when the time has come to say farewell, you dread the parting. You came to our city and college comparative strangers, but you have made many friends, whom you have learned to love. Better than all, not a few during your stay with us have found what is paramount to all secular learning, the saving knowledge of a crucified Saviour. These walls have witnessed your profession of faith and the membership of the church follow you with loving memories. Seldom indeed can it be said of a graduating class, that all, without a solitary exception are in Christ. My dear young friends, let not your future life disappoint the high hopes we entertain regarding you. On the margin of life's stormy and tempestuous sea, commit your destiny to Him who alone knows the way and can safely guide.

Standing with reluctant feet,
Where the brook and river meet,
Womanhood and childhood fleet !

O, thou child of many prayers !
Life hath quicksands, life hath snares !
Care and age come unawares !

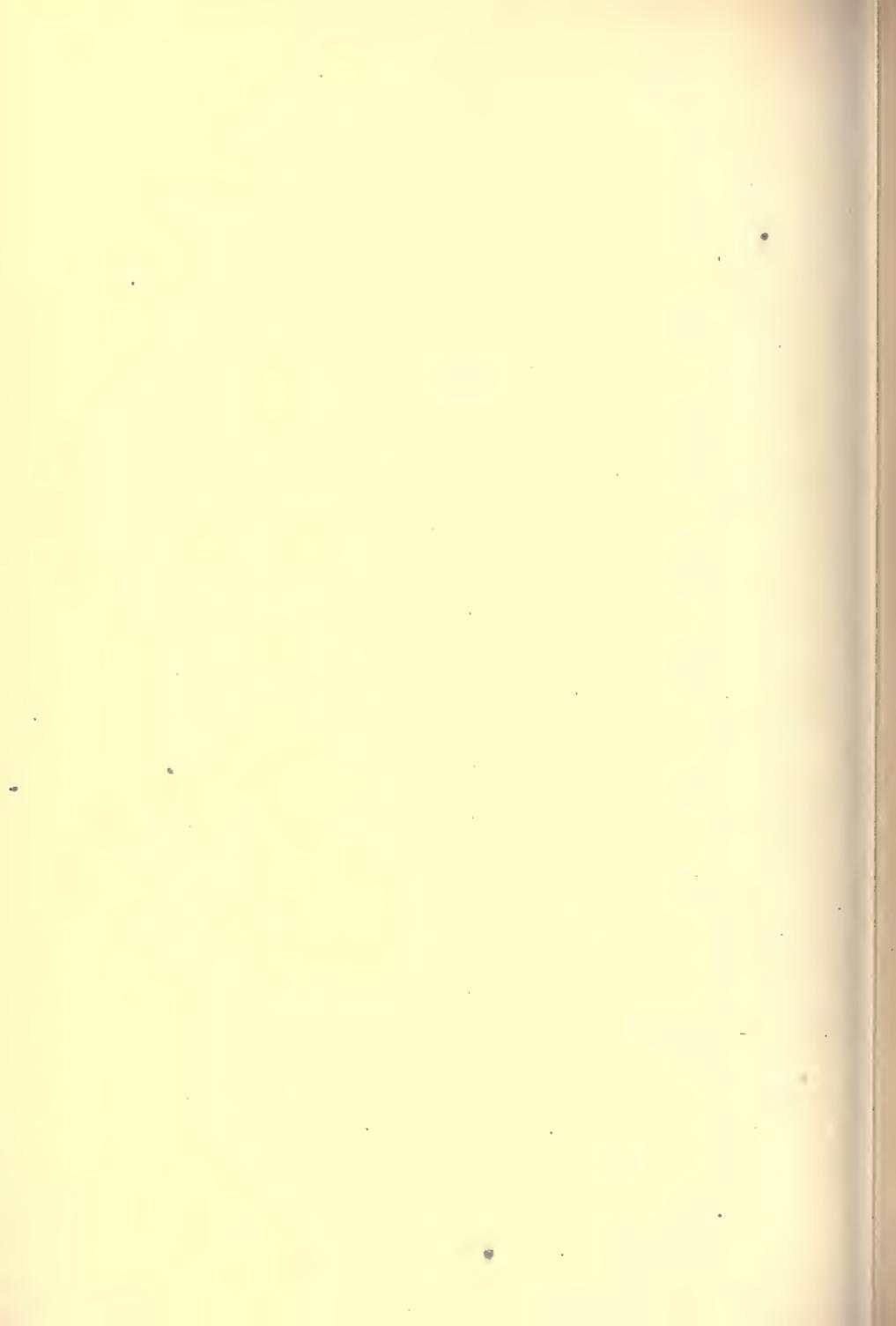
Bear in mind that talent, however sedulously cultivated, and genius however brilliant, cannot alone make honorable or useful lives, apart from genuine piety and moral worth. Consecrate to Him who made you the vigor of your youth ; whatever mental accomplishments you have, lay them at His feet, who rightly claims the homage and service of the highest angel ; prove to the world that there is nothing incompatible between devotion to art and science, and unblemished purity of soul and chastity of speech. The best security against the blandishments of pleasure and that mental indolence which enslaves so many at the present day is constant employment, the maintenance of habits of study and the exercise of those more tender and benevolent emotions which constitute the crown and glory of Christian womanhood. In maintaining a conscience void of offense between God and man, in overcoming the evil propensities of your nature, in defending at all hazards the cause of righteousness against error, in humble submission and cheerful resignation to God's will, whether joy or sorrow should form the major part of your existence : in working single handed, like brave women, who untrammelled by the ties and burdens of home, make humanity at large their debtors ; or, as the centres of happy households, shedding a quiet and benignant light on all the members—in either and every walk of life you will find much to sadden and depress. But when the goal is reached and you look back in the sunset, over the rugged pathway traversed, you will be able to say :—

I have made a changeful journey,
Up the hill of life since morn ;
I have gathered flowers and blossoms,
I've been pierced by many a thorn.
But from out the core of sorrow,
I have plucked a jewel rare :
The strength which mortals gather,
In their ceaseless strife with care.

Members of the Graduating Class, let me counsel you in parting to maintain a spotless purity in thought, conversation and action before the world. Much is expected of you. Your advantages have been great. Your privileges have been many. The good name of the college is to a certain extent in your hands. Your teachers follow you with earnest prayers, that God may guide you and guard you, and that at last we may all meet together in a sinless world, where tears and parting are no more.

Finally, my beloved young friends, farewell. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report: if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace be with you. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."





THE TRUE
Beauty of Womanhood.

“Favour is deceitful and beauty is vain ; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.”

—Proverbs 31, v. 30.

The True Beauty of Womanhood.



HE mother of King Lemuel is giving him advice and warning as to his conduct and companionship. Who he was and who his mother was, we are not informed.

Enough that she was a God-fearing woman, and that her son valued and profited by her counsel. The memory of such a mother was pleasing, and to eulogise her was his delight. He was not ashamed to acknowledge that whatever good fortune attended him was due to the lessons of infancy and boyhood. Instead of setting up his own judgment and following the inclinations of his youthful passions, he listened attentively to her admonitions and practised her precepts.

In this chapter she draws for him the full length portrait of a virtuous woman. The term is not used as the counterpart of vulgarity and unchastity, but as indicating all that goes to constitute a symmetrical character. Such a woman is the most valuable of earthly blessings. Her price is far above rubies. She is not the product of schools and colleges, though these may do much to perfect her natural gifts and excellencies, but the direct creation of the Almighty. Her many practical virtues are then enumerated. She

is worthy of all confidence and her fidelity is unimpeachable. "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil,"—v 11. She is industrious. "She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchants' ships, she bringeth her food from afar,"—v 13-14. She is an early riser. "She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens,"—v 15. She is benevolent and generous. "She stretcheth out her hand to the poor, yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy,"—v 20. She is thoughtful in providing against the future. "She is not afraid of the snow for her household; for all her household are clothed with scarlet,"—v 21. She dresses elegantly and becomingly. "She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple,"—v 22. Her influence upon her husband is elevating. "Her husband is known in the gates, where he sitteth among the elders of the land,"—v 23. She is discreet and winning in her speech. "She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness," v 26. She superintends the details of her household, and takes cognizance of everything under her control. "She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness,"—v 27. Finally, when old age weakens her activity, and impairs her mental faculties, she receives the grateful veneration and tender ministrations of her children. "Her children arise up and call her blessed." As the guardian of their infancy, they requite her care, by smoothing her declining years with unwearied attention to her wants, and fond expressions of their love.

A woman combining so many excellencies is but seldom found. Hence we read: "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all." But however far any one may come short of this picture of a perfect woman, there is one thing within the reach of all. A woman that fears the Lord is the noblest type of her sex. Her religious nature is the source of her methodical habits

and abundant labors. "Favor is deceitful and beauty is vain ; but a woman that feareth the Lord she shall be praised." Birth and pedigree, queenly deportment and artistic culture, are not comparable to the unaffected graces of genuine piety. As the poet laureate of England says in one of his best known poems :

Trust me, Clara Vere de Vere,
From yon blue heavens above us bent,
The gardener Adam and his wife
Smile at the claims of long descent.
How e'er it be, it seems to me,
'Tis only noble to be good,
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.

My first remark then is, that there is no necessary incongruity between literary accomplishments and sweetness of disposition. There is a prevalent opinion that just in so far as a woman attains a high degree of scholarship, she loses that gentleness of deportment which is the crowning glory of her sex. Certain marked instances of what the world calls strong minded women give color to this opinion. But such an idea is wholly unsupported by evidence. Such women are almost invariably found destitute of true culture. Their wearisome advocacy of certain social questions, and their unbecoming prominence on the platform and in the political arena, is the result of narrow and contracted views, as to the place and power that God has assigned them in the world. Such women are not thinkers ; "they pride themselves upon the very little that they know ; and incapable of understanding the humility which is inseparable from true knowledge, they force upon others their petty and superficial attainments." To such the words of Pope are specially applicable :

A litt'e learning is a dangerous thing,
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring ;
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain ;
But drinking largely sobers us again.

Your course of biographical reading thus far, has I am sure, convinced you that the women whose names adorn literature and science, were remarkably modest, unostentatious, and unassuming. Their simplicity of manner and gentle persuasiveness, were as conspicuous as their untiring industry and their surpassing genius. Mary Sommerville and Caroline Herschell and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, working out in spare moments the profound problems of the material creation, or weaving into verse the far reaching questions of philosophy, were the most fascinating and winning of their sex. A sweet fragrance still encircles their memory. It is not the unequalled genius, but the unequalled lives of such women that make their names immortal. As Mrs. Browning beautifully said of Mrs. Hemans :

Albeit softly in our ears her silver song was ringing,
The footfall of her parting soul was softer than her singing.

The time has gone by when women were denied the delight, and pleasure, and honors that result from the study of science and literature. They are no longer 'condescendingly complimented upon the smallest indication of thought and competency to spell ! They have taken their place side by side with the foremost minds of the age, as the exponents of all that is noble and elevating. To the work of perpetuating this change in public sentiment, and showing that there is nothing in the constitution of your minds opposed to the greatest efforts and triumphs, you are now called. Suffer me, then, ere I bid you farewell, to say a few things that may be of value in coming years.

The hope of reaching and wearing the honors of a college graduate has doubtless sustained and cheered you for many years. When wearied and exhausted by the ceaseless strain of the mental powers, the prospect of success has quickened your flagging energies—when with well-earned honors you would leave behind the

drudgery of academic life. You have now all but gained that position. Your future careers in life will doubtless be very different. Some go forth to impart to others the learning they have acquired —others for years to be the light and joy of happy homes, and others it may be to exhibit those charms which not only grace the daughter, but "adorn" the wife." But whatever be your special vocation, let me remind you, that no one deserves the name of scholar who does not maintain more or less through life the same habits of diligence and perseverance to which she has been disciplined in early life. The few years spent at college can do nothing more than lay the foundation for subsequent achievements. Your present proficiency, be what it may, is but the starting point of intellectual life. There cannot be a mistake more fatal than to suppose that a college graduate is a complete and perfect scholar, and that such young men or women have a right to look down with sovereign contempt upon those whom Providence has less highly favored. Humility is the brightest adornment of the christian scholar. In proportion as the mind is enriched and new problems in philosophy and science mastered, and brighter points of vision gained, we should become the more impressed with our ignorance, the crudeness of our ideas, and the imperfection and meagreness of our attainments. Herein lies the modesty of true scholarship and the only certain guarantee for future greatness.

Let me say further, that as no one can be a universal scholar, no student should attempt to include within his or her range of study more than they can successfully and somewhat thoroughly investigate. The most accomplished and comprehensive scholars are, after all, what Sir Isaac Newton said of himself at the close of his life, like boys playing by the sea shore, amused with finding a smoother pebble and a prettier shell than ordinarily, while the great ocean of unexplored truth lies all undiscovered before him. The great evil of our day is the mass of superficial talkers and thinkers

that abound ; inflated egotists and conceited scientists who profess to lead public opinion and mould the character of society, while destitute themselves of any fixed principles of thought or action. It is not the amount of a man's learning, nor the variety of his studies that makes him really useful to the world. All this he may possess and yet be no more than

A bookful blockhead, ignorantly read,
With loads of learned lumber in his head.

It is the perfect mastery of some one department of knowledge so as to make it available for broader generalizations in the future, and of practical value to the world that makes one truly learned. Life is far too short for the thorough study of every department of literature and science. All that you can possibly accomplish consistent with other duties, is to select some few topics out of the wide field over which you have hastily traversed, bringing to bear upon them all the strength of your intellect and all the resources of your mind. Go to fundamental principles—know accurately that which you are desirous of knowing, and however little that may be, upon that basis you will the more easily build up a future superstructure.

After all that has been done for you by earnest teachers, and in spite of special advantages that you may hereafter enjoy, your future position in life is to a great extent of your own choosing. Into your own hands is committed your destiny—whether to spend life frivolously and unprofitably, or to live in the esteem and affection of the truly good, and die amid regrets and tears. No graduate of our college should rest satisfied with merely passing through life with no stain upon her christian character. The aim of each should be to rise superior to the mass around them ; to act in such a manner that her name shall be immortal and her memory fragrant ; for thus “ to live in hearts we leave behind is not to die.” In the words of John Milton, “ I counsel you to be inflamed with the study of

learning and the admiration of virtue ; to be stirred up with high hopes of living to be brave women, dear to God and famous to all ages."

I do not forget that even the most praiseworthy efforts and patient self denial, often come short of expectations. Fortune, or I should rather say Providence, seems frequently to bestow favors where they are least deserved, so that in some cases it is true,

The world knows nothing of its greatest men.

Patronage and influence often more than compensate for solid acquirements, and persons who are void alike of character and talent are raised to eminent positions in the world. But in spite of such exceptions, it remains equally true, especially in this country, that there is no royal road to learning, and that solid and substantial qualities cannot long pass unrecognized and unrewarded.

My second and final remark is, that there is no necessary incongruity between literary accomplishments and the most devoted piety. "Favor is deceitful and beauty is vain ; but a woman that feareth the Lord she shall be praised." That there are notable examples both of men and women, whose researches in nature and philosophy have rather undermined than confirmed their faith in an all-wise Creator and Preserver, is true. But these, whether as regards numbers or influence, occupy a very insignificant place at the present day. The leaders of public opinion in church and state —the profoundest theologians and most earnest workers for the good of humanity are men and women who love and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

That you may meet with difficulties and experience doubts in your further prosecution of the truth is not unlikely. Few minds that are at all speculative pass through life without occasional periods of distress and darkness, and the only sure preservative from error or permanent scepticism is simple faith in the Saviour of men.

With the divinity and atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ as the cardinal doctrine of your creed, you cannot go far astray or be hopelessly lost by the conflicting suggestions of human reason. While giving fullest liberty to those faculties which God has conferred upon you, let them ever be held in subjection to the declarations of God's Word, however perplexing and mysterious these may be. There can be no true peace of mind where doubts exist, however honest are these doubts. Nor can we put that intensity into our work which the age demands, if constantly pressed by unbelief. It has been well said: "There is no such invigorating principle as faith. Men who believe most are the strongest men. Doubt never accomplished anything. Doubters never discovered a new world, nor invented the printing press, nor steam engine, nor power loom, nor sewing machine. Doubters never constructed a pacific railroad, nor the ocean telegraph. A doubter never won a battle nor founded an empire, nor added a statue to the temple of fame. The world's best and bravest work has been done by believers and not by doubters. It is not necessary that you should be able to harmonize all the apparent discrepancies that exist between science and revelation, nor explain the inscrutable acts of the Divine Being. Sufficient that you understand your personal relations to the Almighty, and the way of safety through the cross. As the pilot of the vessel, who was asked if he knew all the rocks along the coast, replied, "No; it is only necessary to know where there are no rocks," so in like manner, looking unto Christ, the soul is secure and beyond the reach of peril.

"Favor is deceitful and beauty is vain." The opinion of the world is in many cases unreliable. Personal graces and accomplishments, however pleasing and fascinating, are shortlived. The woman who finds pleasure in the empty flatteries of gay admirers is to be pitied. "But the woman that fears the Lord, she shall be praised." I do not ask for you, riches nor high position, but I pray

that you may be found in every changing condition of life true to yourselves and to the Master whom you profess to serve. You go forth from this college with high expectations entertained regarding you, and the subject of many prayers. We have endeavored to give you not only a sound education, but to lay the foundations of sound religious principles, which will be found valuable in coming years. As the graduates of a christian seminary, the eyes of the world are upon you. You occupy a prominent position. Your intellectual attainments, however varied, cannot atone for lack of lady-like deportment, and those higher graces which are the bestowment of God's Holy Spirit. Cultivate humility—purity of heart and conversation. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

While I counsel you to continue, as opportunity may be given, a faithful prosecution of your duties, I exhort you to make full proof of your attainments in consecrated labor for God. Never was there a period in the history of the church when there were louder calls for the highest gifts and the most unselfish sacrifices than at the present day. Whatever talents you possess, use them for the advancement of His Kingdom, whose subjects you are. Are there any here who have not yet given themselves to Christ? I beseech you with all the solicitude of one deeply interested in your eternal welfare, delay no longer. Whatever may be your capacities and gifts, without personal religion they are of little value. Our efforts in your behalf will have proved a lamentable failure, if we have not succeeded in bringing you to the cross of Christ, there to leave behind the burden of your sins, and in heaven to cast your crowns before His throne. As you now enter upon a new stage of existence, exposed to manifold temptations and varied trials, take Him

for your friend, whose love is lasting and whose sympathy is infinite. Say in the words of the Christian poet :

I waste no more in idle dreams, my life, my soul away,
I wake to know my better self—I wake to watch and pray ;
Thought, feeling, time, and idols vain, I've lavished all too long ;
Henceforth to holier purposes, I pledge myself, my song.

Said Hedley Vicars, after his remarkable conversion, in a letter to his youngest sister : "Be sure you will feel far happier in this world even by making religion your chief business and study, than by all the pleasures and gaieties which your young heart may be longing after." With these words I close. We part, never all to meet again, as we do to-night.

Oh for the time when in our seraph wings,
We veil our brows before the eternal throne—
The day when drinking knowledge at its springs
We know as we are known.



Decision of Character.

“And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee ; for whither thou goest, I will go : and where thou lodgest I will lodge : thy people shal be my people, and thy God my God ; where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried : the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.”

—Ruth 1, v. 16, 17

Decision of Character.

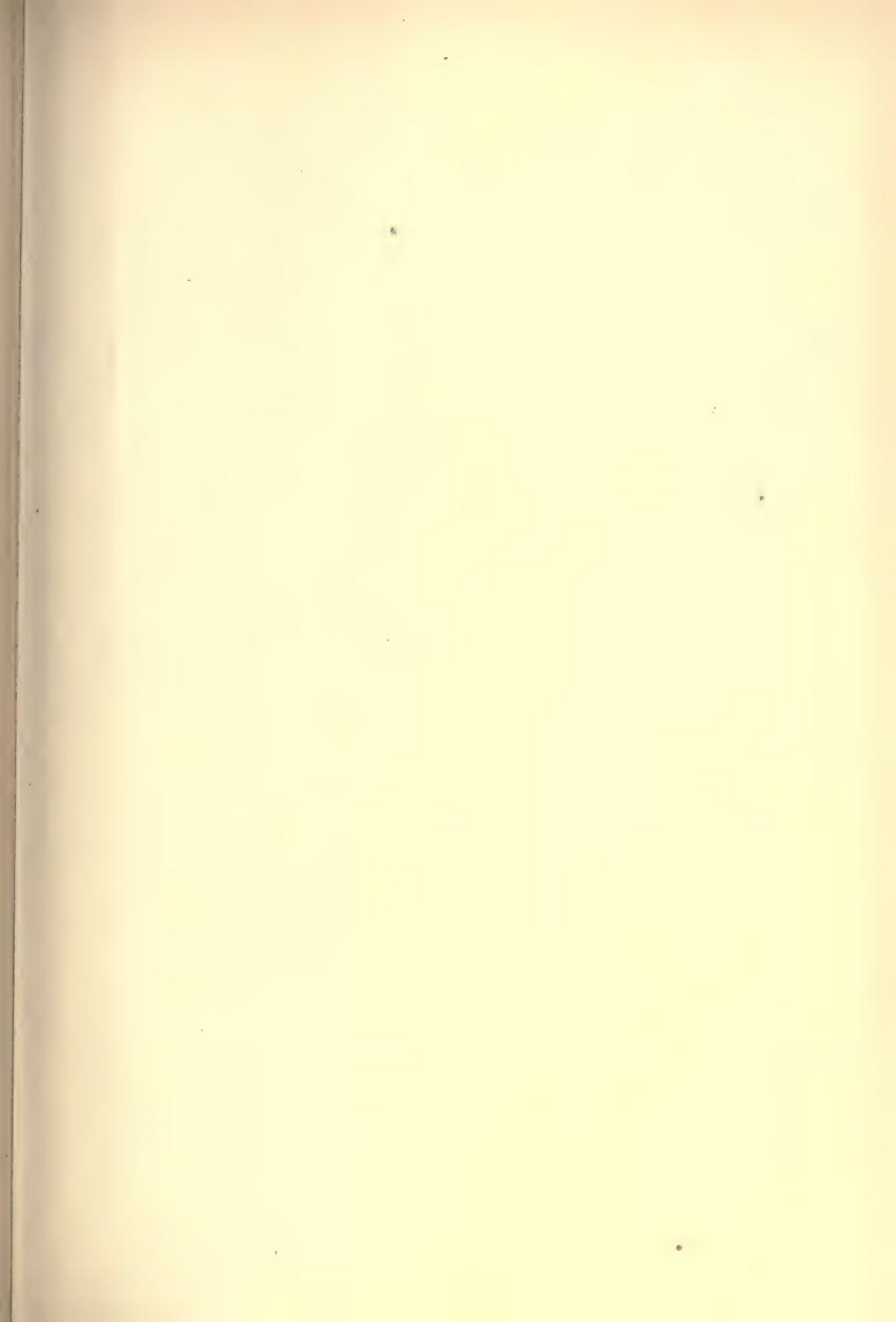


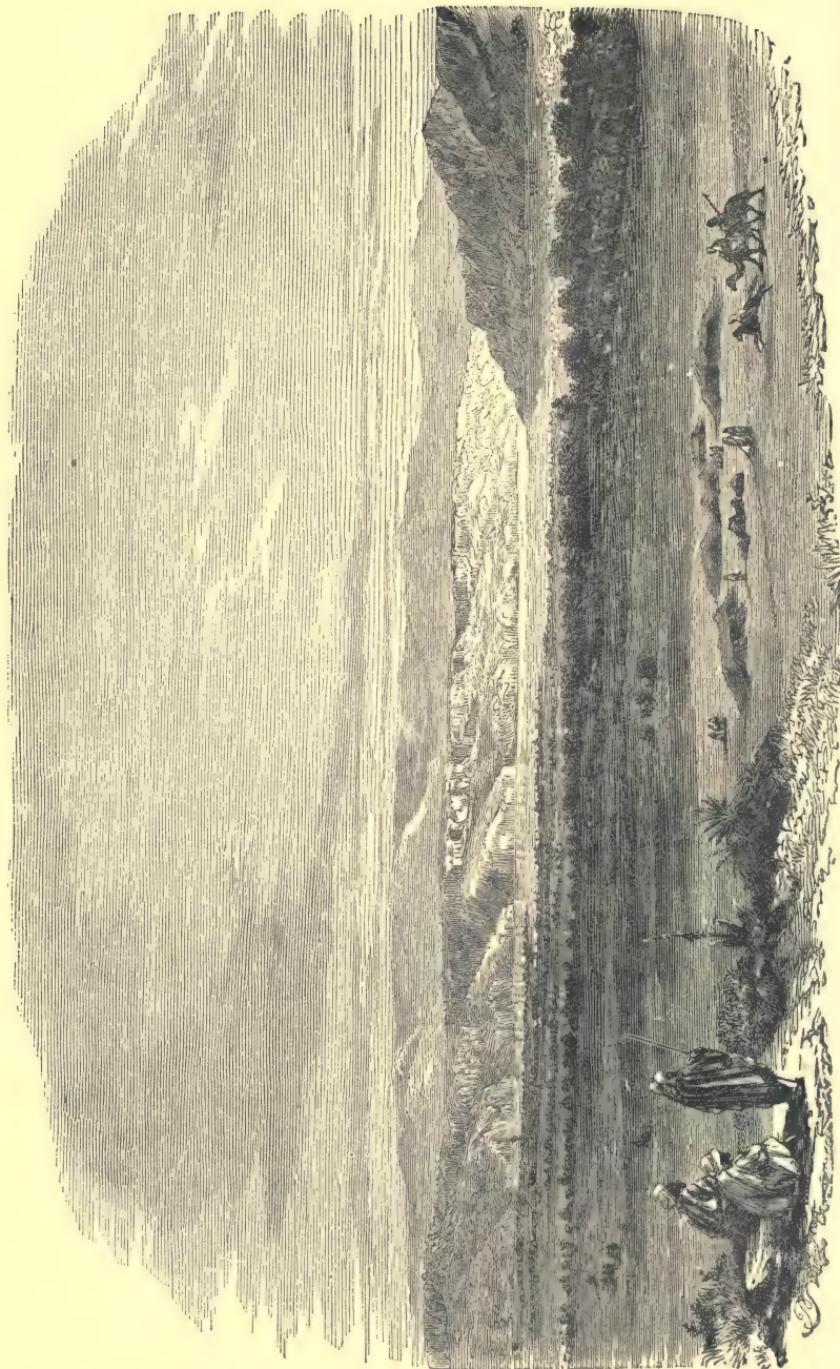
MUCH interest is naturally attached to the kingdom of Moab, and much is said concerning it in the Old Testament scriptures. The Moabites and Israelites were near relatives. Lot, the father of Moab, was nephew to Abraham, and both were descended from Terah. The history of both peoples began about the same time, for Moab and Isaac, the son of Abraham, were probably born in the same year, and the histories of their descendants run side by side for nearly 1,500 years. They were also near neighbors, for part of Israel occupied a portion of the Moabitish territory, and a great body of the nation was severed from the land of Moab simply by the river Jordan. Balak, who hired Balaam to curse the people of Israel, was King of Moab. Mount Nebo, from whence the Lord showed Moses the land which he had promised to give to the seed of Abraham, was in the land of Moab, and Ruth, the faithful and affectionate daughter-in-law of Naomi, who abandoned her idols and her native land, was a Moabitess.

Until very lately, however, nothing but the extensive ruins of Moab, told of her ancient grandeur. No inscription had been found
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to corroborate the page of inspiration. But some few years ago a remarkable record was found in an old basaltic stone, covered with the ancient language of the country. Attempts were made by Europeans to purchase the stone, but the Arabs finding it valuable, became exorbitant in their demands, asking as much as five thousand dollars. Finally the various Arab chiefs, putting in their claims on different grounds, came to angry words and blows, and making a fire round the stone and pouring water upon it when heated, split it into a number of fragments. These fragments, however, have been in part recovered, and the inscription upon the stone so far as legible verifies the Old Testament scriptures. The inscription makes reference to the visitations of Moab under successive Israelitish monarchs, to certain victories of Moab when she recovered her freedom, and to the names of mountains, cities, localities, kings and divinities of Moab. It also mentions Jehovah, under whose guidance and protection, the chosen people conquered, and because of whose anger Moab suffered. All these things invest the history of Ruth with more than common interest to every Bible student.

The story itself is touching and true to nature. Bethlehem, "the house of bread," is stricken with famine, and necessity compels a separation for a time, from the sacred associations of home and friends. People do not generally leave their native land without good cause. The emigrant on the vessel's deck with tear dimmed eye, takes the last fond look of his home and country, and with emotion that almost chokes his utterance, bids it a long farewell. But if it is hard to leave one's native soil, it is sad beyond expression when emigrants in a strange land, in their loneliness and friendlessness, are smitten by death. Such was the bitter experience of Naomi. Elimelech, her husband, and shortly afterwards her two sons, who had married Moabitish women, die in the land of Moab. Those upon whom she fondly leaned were taken from her. The





The Land of Moab

strong arm was laid low. Her counsellor, stay and solace, was no more. It was a triple grief. She was a widow, indeed, in a strange land. Bereavements at home are hard enough to bear, when we are surrounded by sympathetic friends, but to bury one's friends in a foreign land, is sad indeed! And now the poor widow, bereaved of husband and sons, prepares to return to her native land. What more natural than that she should do so? There was now nothing to detain her in Moab. A foreign country had no attractions, save that its graves contained her dead, and so we read: "She arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab, and they went on the way to return into the land of Judah."

It was a critical moment for Ruth and Orpah, her daughters-in-law. They had lived together from infancy, and had been companions and neighbors from youth; had played around the same palm tree; sat at the same cottage door; wandered on the same hills of Moab; enjoyed the same religious privileges, and suffered the same bereavement. The time had now come when they must determine to go with Naomi, or remain behind. The boundary line was now reached between the two countries, when Naomi says: "Go return each to her mother's house; the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead and with me. The Lord grant that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband; and they lifted up their voice and wept." It was a sad scene. I think I see the three women standing in the highway, discussing whether to say farewell or not. "Naomi with eyes full of eager entreaty, and lips quivering with pain; Orpah moved to weeping, yet perplexed—wondering what decision to make, and casting a glance ever and anon back on the road they had come; Ruth standing, grasping her mother's hand, with unwavering resolve in every line of her face and attitude." Both at first determined to accompany Naomi, saying, "Surely, we will return with thee unto thy people." But Naomi will still further test the strength of their affection and the

firmness of their resolutions. "Turn again, my daughters," she says, "why will ye go with me? Are there yet any more sons in my womb, that may be your husbands? Turn again, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say I have hope, if I should have an husband to-night, and should also bear sons, would ye tarry for them from having husbands? Nay, my daughters, for it grieveth me much for your sakes, that the hand of the Lord is against me." And now comes the final decision—Orpah changes her determination to go to the land of Judah, and resolves to stay in Moab. She began to count the cost. She had a mother to shelter her, while Naomi could only bestow her blessing, and so she contents herself with kissing her mother-in-law, and going back to her country and her gods.

Orpah was in some respects a lovely character. Had no such severe test been sprung upon her, she would have won our admiration equally with Ruth. She was of a gentle, affectionate disposition. She had been a kind, loving wife for ten years to her now dead husband, and a tender, dutiful daughter-in-law to Naomi. Her human attachments were strong. She had that fervid, sentimental, attractive grace, which often passes for true religion, but which cannot surrender present pleasures and comforts for nobler prospective rewards. She was unreliable; with good impulses, but wanting strength of character to sustain them. Like the maiden decked for the grave, looking lovely even in death, so are such characters. But there is no life, and the beauty and comeliness soon turn to rottenness and decay.

Ruth was an entirely different character. She came unto Naomi saying: "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me and more also, if aught but death part thee

and me." In other words, she is prepared for poverty, for long widowhood, for exile from home and country, for all that shall follow faithfulness to her mother-in-law. Here we have complete identification of interests, and thorough surrender of will. She will embrace her religion, dwell, travel, die, and be buried with Naomi.

In reviewing this touching story, we learn these lessons :

First,—Ruth's conduct indicates great decision of character. She clave unto Naomi. It is a quality of vast importance in religious matters. Vacillation, hesitancy, inconstancy, are productive of serious evils. Halting between two opinions is alike unmanly and perilous. Unreliable, wavering, and fickle natures never command confidence and respect. Where duty is plain, immediate action is the part of wisdom.

Second,—Ruth's conduct indicates strong affection and personal attachment. She and Naomi were kindred spirits. They had grown up into each other, as the tender vine entwines itself around the stronger oak. Their lives were bound together, so that they could not live apart. The character of Naomi commended her religion. She was spiritual mother, as well as mother-in-law, to Ruth. She was her instructor in divine things, and the instrument of winning her heart to the God of Israel.

Very often, as in the present instance, the influence of a sweet and holy life attracts and decides another for Christ. Naomi made religion lovely. Ruth accepted her creed as translated in her character, and was thus led to cast in her lot with the people of God. As the apostle says in writing to the Corinthian church, "Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men."

Third,—Ruth lost nothing by her decision. For a time, doubtless, she and Naomi endured poverty and hardships. Their return to Bethlehem Judah, was indeed sad. A poor widow returning poorer than when she left home, seeking shelter for her lonely head after her husband's death. Such is the picture of Naomi, as she

enters the city gates. Her old companions and friends could hardly recognize her. "Is this Naomi?" they asked, the one of the other. She had gone forth in the pride of womanhood ; now she returns with bent form and careworn countenance. These ten years had brought many wrinkles on her brow, and whitened the hairs of her head. No wonder that she said, "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara, for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me again home empty."

But ultimately neither Naomi nor Ruth had cause to regret the step they took. Ruth gained a home and position that amply recompensed her for leaving Moab, and renouncing her kindred and her gods. She won the heart of Boaz, who, overcoming the prejudice of his nation against the Moabites, married her, and Boaz was rewarded in his union to one, whose love to her widowed mother-in-law was the best of all pledges that she would be a faithful wife. Thus Ruth became the mother of a great race, including King David, from whom the Saviour sprang.

The conduct of Ruth should be copied by every young christian. What means profession of faith and sitting at the Lord's table? Nothing less than life-long service. It is union not only for life, but beyond death. It should be the starting point for holy activity and concentrated zeal. As the hymn says :

My spirit, soul and body,
Jesus, I give to thee ;
A consecrated offering,
Thine ever more to be.
My all is on the altar,
I'm waiting for the fire ;
Waiting, waiting, waiting,
I'm waiting for the fire.

Ruth's conduct should be copied by those who are not as yet God's people. To some here this may be the moment of decision. The call may never be renewed. Which of the two courses of

conduct will you adopt? *Orpah's* or *Ruth's*? Will you kiss or cleave? After all the entreaties addressed you, have you resolved to go back to your country and your gods, or can you say with Ruth, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God?" While I speak, bands of angels are hovering over you, eager to proclaim the glad tidings that another soul has been saved and added to the number of the redeemed. Straightway act. Yield to Christ. The soul expands and grows by active consecration; doubts disperse; accusations and fears cease to torment, and peace reigns within. No man or woman ever suffered by deciding for Christ. Present material sacrifices are more than compensated for by subsequent spiritual gains. Godliness with contentment is great gain, having the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come.

Finally, this decision of character is equally necessary to success in every secular profession in which you may engage. When once you have found out the proper sphere for the exercise of the talents entrusted you, prosecute your calling with singleness of aim, and seek the highest place among your compeers. Put your best intelligence into whatever you do, and regard life as useful only in so far as you are the means of happiness to others. Forget self, and rise superior to the empty plaudits of petty minds, whose flattery is as worthless as it is insincere. Resolve to make each day memorable by performing some good action. As Carlyle says: "Know what thou can't do, then work at it like a Hercules." When Jenny Lind, the great singer, in the year 1850, was going through the United States, electrifying crowded audiences by her marvellous voice, she went down the Mississippi by steamboat, and as the boat stopped at various places, crowds of blacks gathered around her to hear her sing. It is said by Sir Jules Benedict, who accompanied her, that she sang on these occasions with as much conscientiousness and pains, as if she had been before one of the

most critical audiences of the metropolis. On being asked why she took such pains before such people, who could not appreciate her, she replied: "I love my art too well to engage in any of its exercises otherwise than with all the skill I possess." This is an unfailing mark of true nobleness of mind.

It is very true that the strength of woman lies chiefly in her heart; that it shows itself in their strong love and instinctive perception of right and wrong, and that her noblest and most effective endowments lie within the domain of the affections, for which no amount of intellectual force or grasp of logic can be substituted. But it is none the less true, that the world needs women of culture and force of character;—women who by their educational training, may indirectly at least mould the destiny of nations, and become potent factors in the elevation, not only of their own sex, but of humanity at large. As has been well said: "When there comes a generation, with minds large enough to provide impartially, adequately and wisely for the young of both sexes, the completer life of the household and of the race will come forward with a rush of angels' wings, like a fulfilment of Tennyson's fine prophecy:

The man be more of woman, she of man;
He gain in sweetness and in moral height,
She mental breadth, nor fail in childward care,
Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind;
Till at last she set herself to man,
Like perfect music unto noble words,
And so these twain, upon the skirts of time,
Sit side by side, full sunned in all their powers,
Dispensing harvest, sowing the to-be,
Self-reverent each, and reverencing each,
Distinct in individualities—

* * * * *

Then comes the statelier Eden back to man.

Student life is not finished when the college halls are abandoned. The text book is necessary and preparatory to a wider arena, where the mental powers and social sympathies may be more fully devel-

oped. Books are useful and indispensable to the acquisition of knowledge, but they are after all only the tools and materials by which we are enabled to explore new fields and enter upon untraversed regions of thought. They should never be regarded as more than guide books to nature's wonders and mysteries. If we can discover the hidden path without them, so much the better. Eminence in scholarship is not attained by miscellaneous reading, and in picking up random scraps of information, but in the earnest and thoughtful mastery of some one subject. The sceptic is the one who sees only the pieces of things fragmentarily and detached ; the believer is the one who sees things in wholes. As Lord Bacon says: "A little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion."

Young ladies of the graduating class, the time has come when you must bid farewell to teachers and companions, whose fellowship and efforts on your behalf you doubtless value. Bright as the prospect is, the hour of separation brings with it sorrow. With many of you I have been on intimate terms for years, nor have I failed to mark your growth in grace, as well as in secular knowledge ; and now as you leave us to hear other voices on the Sabbath day, and learn from other teachers in the great practical school of life, my prayers go with you, that God may sanctify the learning you have acquired, and help you to use it for the Master's glory. The best recompense you can make your teachers, is to prove by your deportment the lasting value of their labors. Some of you will dignify christian homes by the sweet gentleness of pure and holy lives ; and is not this the most exalted and potent of all conditions for doing good? Others of you, doubtless, enter other institutions of learning, and carry forward to higher stages of efficiency the work of education in our land ; while some I trust, if called upon, will not be found unwilling to go far hence, and seek to raise their degraded sisters in heathen lands. All these are but different

departments of God's work. As the Hebrew women of old finished the old tabernacle in blue, and purple, and scarlet, and gold, so may you be honored in adorning the living temple of the human soul.

Oh, Christian women, for the temples set,
Throughout earth's desert lands—do not forget
The sanctuary curtains need your 'broidery yet.

The character I have to-night thus fragmentarily portrayed is not beyond your reach. Ruth was not gifted above her sex. She had none of those advantages which christian women of the present day possess. She was destitute of the culture of the schools, but rich in faith. In her own proper sphere she acted a part that gained for her the commendation alike of God and man. You cannot all alike become famous, but you may all attain that sweetness and symmetry of deportment that renders very ordinary endowments of surpassing value to society. The real "womanly woman" is not the one who seeks to overstep the bounds of her sex, daring to do strange things that excite remark and challenge criticism ; but she who from day to day, under the eye of the great taskmaster, conscientiously, and with single aim, addresses herself to the humblest enterprises, who is not ashamed to say :

Yes, God has made me a woman,
And I am content to be
Just what He meant, not reaching out
For other things, since He,
Who knows me best and loves me most,
Has ordered this for me.

A woman to live my life out
In quiet womanly ways,
Hearing the far-off battle,
Seeing as through a haze,
The crowding, struggling world of men,
Fight through their busy days.

With the Whole Heart.

“He did it with all his heart, and prospered.”

— 2nd Chronicles 31, v. 21.

With the Whole Heart.

HE great painter, Opie, was once asked, "What do you mix your colors with?" To which he replied, "With brains, sir." A truth of vast practical importance is implied, namely, that intelligence, devotion, zeal and common sense are necessary in order to success in any and every profession.

Hezekiah, we are told in the context, did that which was right before God. He repaired the house of the Lord; cast out the uncleanliness; sanctified the sanctuary and the people; offered sacrifices and made atonement; proclaimed and kept the passover; brake the images in pieces; cut down the groves and destroyed the altars. He did everything with his heart, and prospered. God not only approved his deeds, but commended his zeal.

He was a thorough reformer in church and state—a moral revolutionist. There was no temporizing nor expediency in his actions. He consulted neither the opinions nor caprices of his subjects or courtiers, but sought to know the will of heaven, and acted accordingly.

Such men are often very unpopular. Fanatics, enthusiasts and destructionists are the names applied to them. They are regarded as possessed of but one idea; narrow-minded—illiberal. But such characters the age demands and God approves.

Let us, then, as somewhat appropriate on the present occasion, enquire into the meaning of the phrase, “He did it with all his heart.”

It implies that in religious matters success is in exact proportion as we give to them our whole heart. It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing. “My meat and my drink,” said Christ, “is to do the will of Him that sent me.” “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work.” “I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished.” “The zeal of mine house hath eaten me up.”

Every man, then, who would gain eternal life, must set about it with his whole heart. No toil, no rest. Rest is sweet, but service in proportion to love is sweeter still. No cross, no crown. God does not offer future rewards as premiums for indolence. We must agonize, and strive, and wrestle, and labor, in order to enter upon rest. As men running the rapids and straining every nerve to avoid the jagged rocks, so must we summon up all the energies of our nature to secure salvation.

It follows, also, that in the attainment of specific gifts and graces, success is in proportion as we give to the work our whole heart. There is undue blame put upon God oftentimes by christians, for their spiritual deadness, when their own indolence ought rather to be rebuked. “Covet earnestly the best gifts,” “Desire spiritual gifts,” says the apostle. “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect. Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in

Christ Jesus." "So fight I, not as one that beateth the air." The testimony of scripture everywhere is to the effect that christians are not mere passive recipients of heavenly influences, but that in the strengthening and developing of their gifts and graces, they are active agents. Man is not a mere senseless block of marble, unconscious and unmoved under the chisel of the sculptor ; but as flowers open under the warming influences of the sun, so is the heart and its sympathies to respond to the touch of God's spirit. The ivy instinctively clasps and runs up the ruins, and the soul of man, once breathed upon by God's grace, is to seek after higher and nobler attainments until perfection is reached. A man in the common affairs of life cannot without application prosper ; if he is contented with the very lowest style of civilization, he need not exert his powers, physical or mental. The instinct of the animal is soon developed, but there are no limits to the possibilities of reason, and just as men aspire after something grander and loftier than mere manual drudgery, are self-denial and persistent effort demanded.

A christian may thus remain at the very lowest possible grade of spiritual life, satisfied with the rudiments of christianity, and the more elementary attainments of the babe, without aspirations after more fully developed gifts and graces and perfect manhood. The round of stated observances may be observed, and some benefit derived. Duties may be formally and perfunctorily discharged, and the laws of spiritual living be literally obeyed, while their spirit is ignored and all yearnings after moral excellence and superior worth suppressed and stilled.

Now I take it that God never intended converted men and women to live after such a fashion. When religion is once accepted and professed, it should be the business of the life. And surely if in the ordinary employments of the age, men are honored according as they give to them their individual attention, it is becoming

that in prosecuting the christian life, they should do it with their whole heart. To be content with the lowest rank, when we might fill the highest place ; to be saved by fire, when we might even now be polished shafts, and in eternity shine as stars in the heavenly firmament, is hardly in keeping with our duty and our destiny.

Every christian possesses certain gifts. But in very few instances are they cultivated as they might be. And thus when called to occupy positions of responsibility, they plead unfitness and incapacity. They have the spiritual weapons, but they lie unused. They remind one of the armour room in the Tower of London. There you see the armour of kings and dukes and nobles—the mere external forms of iron and steel of those who wore them centuries ago. But there is not a single arm that can be lifted up, and so christians go on parade once in a while, and flourish their regimentals, and go through certain mechanical gestures, but no one is ever killed, and no sin is ever slain. They spend a great deal of time in denouncing iniquity, but the blows fall short of the enemy. They have a certain kind of piety, but it belongs more to the cloistered cell than the busy world. They are rigidly orthodox, intelligent, truthful, and blameless, but their religion never becomes aggressive, and never closes in upon surrounding ungodliness.

Now in the church, as in the world, and as it is in every well organized army, every member should have his place. Having gifts differing according to the grace that is given us, we are to teach, or rule, or exhort, according to our individual ability; not as child's play, but with our whole heart. Five years of consecrated labor is better than fifty spent in dreamy indolence. A sharp axe in the hands of a skilled woodsman will accomplish more than a dozen amateurs whose muscles have never been exercised. It is the spirit that prompts us to work, and the earnestness with which we engage in it, that conquers difficulties and gains results. The most honored servants of God are not the most learned, nor the

most talented, but the most whole hearted. What they do they do with all their heart, forgetting themselves in the great business of the Master, and sacrificing all personal considerations for its advancement. Heart power or spiritual force is the great element in effective work. The lips touched with the live coal from the altar, and the heart warmed by the fires of divine love can do and dare what mere cultured intellect cannot undertake.

The time is short and eternity is near and long. Souls are perishing. Be up then and doing. Your utmost diligence and devotion will seem all too small, when you look up the record of your lives. Find your work and qualify yourselves for it. Do something. Do it now. Where good can be done love is fertile in expedients for overtaking it. Be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work, nor devise, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest." Be not readily nor unduly discouraged over failures. The human agents in carrying out God's plans must expect such, but the end is victory, as the poet says ;

We must take our turn at the mill,
And grind out the golden grain ;
And work at our task with a resolute will,
Over and over again.

Once doing may not suffice,
Though doing be not in vain ;
And a blessing failing us once or twice,
Will come if we try again.

The text also implies that success in secular callings is in proportion as we engage in them with our whole heart. There is no royal road to riches. A few are born so. Others grow rich easily — everything that they touch seems to turn to gold. But the rule is, that industry, perseverance and application win the day.* Perhaps it is not theologically true, but practically it is that—

All are architects of Fate,
Working in these walls of Time ; .
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.

This indeed is the teaching of scripture. "The hand of the diligent maketh rich. Seest thou a man diligent in business? He shall stand before kings. Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." In the ordinary business of life there is enough to tax the most capacious mind. To be equally great and successful in mercantile, literary and political pursuits, is impossible. The pursuit of such different avocations is not only uncongenial to most minds, but in the long run dissipating and unprofitable. Men who attempt all are failures, for any one of them demands the entire energies of the brain.

Illustrations of this truth abound. In business, Budgett and Peabody; in literature, Macaulay and Thackeray, Dickens and Carlyle; in statesmanship, Pitt and Peel, Cobden and Bright, Beaconsfield and Gladstone. The telescope cannot sweep the heavens all at once. The angle of observation must be changed. Great names are always associated with some one enterprise or movement adapted to their peculiar cast of mind. Howard and Wilberforce, Mrs. Sommerville and Florence Nightingale, are evidences of this fact. In professional life men become famous in specialties. Labor is constantly being sub-divided, as civilization extends and expands. The writer, the orator, and the pleader, are now separate professions. The dentist, the druggist, and the doctor are different callings. Natural tastes determine different callings. Kepler, Galileo, Michael Angelo, James Watt, Christopher Wren and Gustavus Dore had a passion for their favorite studies, which began in youth. Artists are of two kinds. The true artist must paint, or carve, or play, to satisfy the cravings of the mind, and realize the creations of his brain. Not so the man who paints, or carves, or

sings for a mere livelihood. The former is the man of genius, and invariably attains the highest degree of excellence. The latter never goes beyond mechanical rules. But genius is nothing without intense heart and brain work. The soul on fire with some noble idea is for the moment inspired, and often surpasses what it proposes. Poets thus sing of the birds—their hearts are in every song. But apart from the steady application of the mental powers, genius can accomplish nothing of lasting value :

Not in the clamor of the crowded street,
Not in the shouts and plaudits of the throng,
But in ourselves are triumph and defeat.

There are doubtless a few exceptions where men of extraordinary genius excel easily in everything they undertake. But these exceptions only prove the rule.

It may be answered truthfully that ability, earnestness and frugality are not always prosperous. Abundant crops do not, every season, bless the faithful husbandman. But it is equally true that no crops whatever come in to the slattern, save thorns and thistles. The years that are often spent in frivolous pursuits and sordid aims bring no return whatever but remorse and penury. Hence the wisdom of the poet's utterance :

Count that day lost whose low descending sun
Views from thy hand no worthy action done.

It follows then, from what has been said, that our range of studies and labor must be restricted if we work with all our heart. Life is far too short, and mind too feeble to gain excellence in every department. Hezekiah did not attempt the work of Solomon, nor David that of Joshua. Our mental powers are incapable of intense concentration on a vast variety of subjects. To attempt too much at first is to make life a failure. True greatness begins in small things, and moves on from one achievement to another with in-

creased power and confidence. Small duties and meagre opportunities are the training schools of success, and no one gets the prize who does not take his degree in them. Many young men and women are ruined by suddenly acquiring fame. They are unequal to the position into which they have been thrust, more by a conjunction of circumstances than their own individual merits. They do not possess the courage and endurance necessary to sustain them in maintaining the honors conferred upon them, and reaching forward to still greater conquests. They lack the incentive of a strong motive, and dream life away in common place and idle pursuits, which render no return, and neither benefit man nor glorify God. They become cold, selfish and indifferent to the wants of humanity—repulsive and unlovely rather than attractive—living and dying, undistinguished by any act of moral heroism or mental effort that might have secured for them a place in the temple of fame.

Young ladies of the graduating class, you have arrived at a point of momentous interest to yourselves, and great rejoicing to your friends. Your teachers have been trying

To mould
And fashion plastic newness into grace,
To make the youthful heart heroic,
And light with thought the maiden's face.

You are now looking forward to years of happiness, freed from the cares and sorrows of student life. But whatever you may become will be due to what you have undergone as undergraduates of this college, of which you are soon to be alumni. As one very beautifully says: What were womanhood without the preparatory stages of infancy, childhood and youth. With their experiences, glad and sad, their struggles and victories, their disappointments and chastenings, their tears and prayers and hopes and fears, their precious legacy of many memories! The very conception of a life with such an hiatus of blankness and nothingness yawning between infancy

and maturity, if not indeed impossible, is cold and weird and cheerless. In going forth, be not over-confident of continued triumphs. Longfellow, in his poem, "My Lost Youth," says:

I remember the gleams and glooms that dart
Across the school girl's brain,
The song and the silence in the heart,
That in part are prophecies, and in part
Are longings wild and vain.

Humility is one of the best guarantees for the achievement of future greatness. Nor is it unequal to the noblest endurance and self-sacrificing zeal. The Roman women, in the earlier ages of christianity, were celebrated for their constancy and adherence to the faith. Their sufferings and death, under the most brutal and ignominious martyrdoms on the cross, or in the bloody arena, form the most touching incidents in Christian tradition. In every generation, the strong religious convictions of women have been the mainstay of our holy religion. The true sisters of charity are not the women immured within the bars of a convent, or within the damp walls of a dreary cell, but such as spend their lives in active labors of love for the good of all with whom they come in contact, or can reach by their voice or pen. It were a sad thing for the world if our cultivated women were all like Harriet Martineau, who lost all faith in God and immortality, and hesitated not to say, at the close of her long and not uneventful life: "I feel no solicitude about a parting which will bring no pain. I am frankly satisfied to have done with life. I have had a noble share of it, and I desire no more. I neither wish to live longer here, nor to find life again elsewhere. It seems to me simply absurd to expect it." With all your triumphs here, it were surely a painful thought that this short period of probation was the end; that life should be extinguished when death approaches; that there should be no future where the intellect, that has just begun to open to the reception of the truth, shall blaze forth under the direct illumination of God himself.

In such a moment as this the joy that naturally accompanies the day of graduation, must be somewhat mellowed by the prospect of parting from companions and friends whose smile has lightened days of toil. But what is life but change? Like

Ships that pass in the night and speak each other in passing,
So on the ocean of life, we pass and speak one another;
Only a look and a voice, then darkness again and a silence.

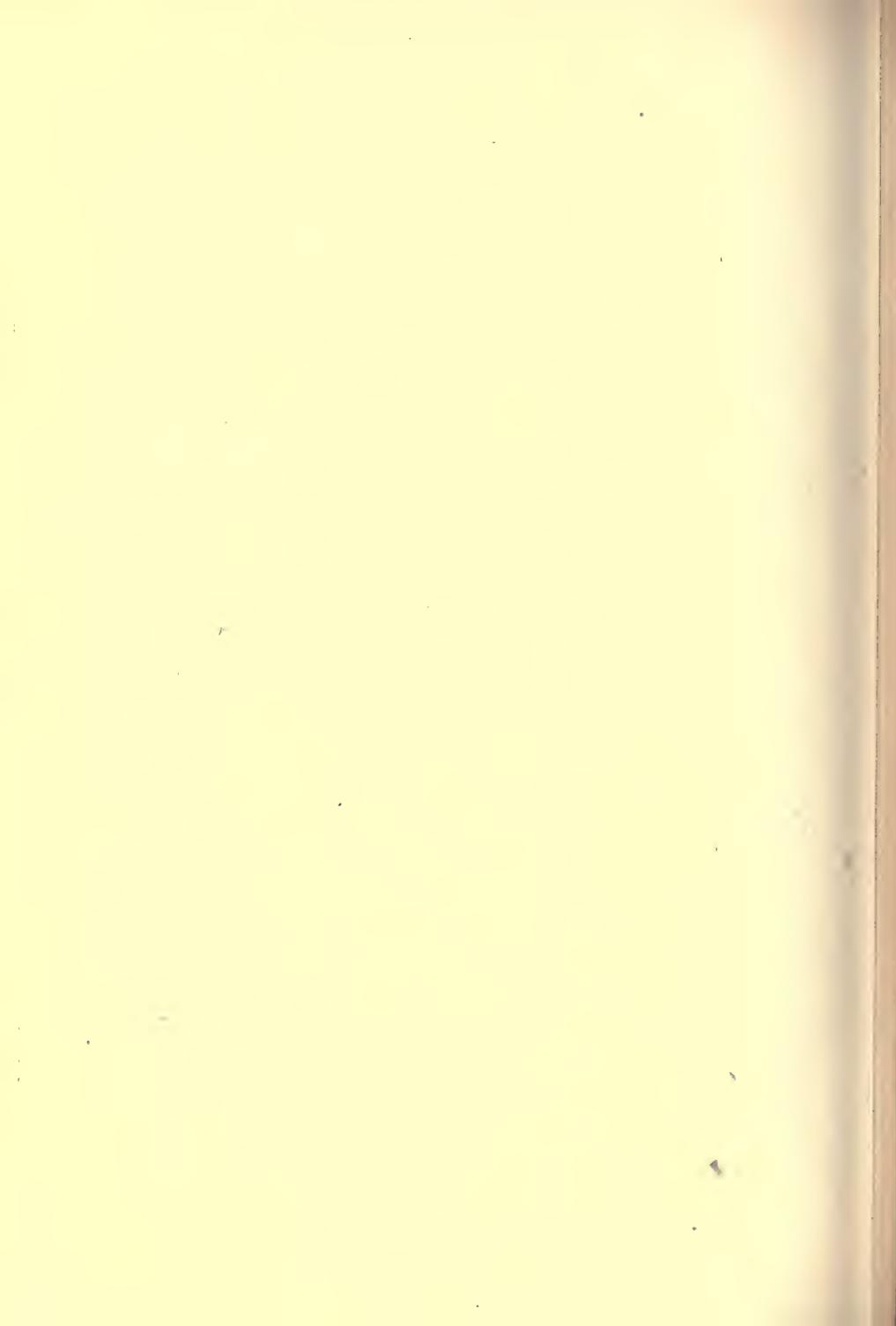
Blessed be God, there is a land where the union of friends is permanent, and where no cloud shall shade the sunlight of existence. Is this your hope? Are you anticipating the day when you shall be crowned with deathless laurels—when you shall enter upon grander studies than can possibly employ human thought, and attain a higher standing than falls to the lot of the most diligent student on earth? There is nothing that can compensate for the lack of a religious hope; nothing that can make life attractive and death desirable, but the personal knowledge that Christ has pardoned sin, and rendered immortality a certainty, and that come what may, nothing can separate from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

In leaving this church and the college where you have spent so many days, I ask for you only what a loving father sees fit to send. Riches are unstable and cannot satisfy the soul; beauty is fading and cannot exert a permanent influence; scholarship unchastened and unsanctified, only adds to perplexity and unrest of mind. But the conscious presence of Christ keeps the heart undismayed and stable, amid the fiercest agitations and fieriest trials. If like Esther of old, you are to obtain favor in the king's sight and wear the royal crown, there must be more or less discipline in the present life. It is related that in Germany there stood two vast towers far apart on the extreme of a castle; and that the old baron to whom the castle belonged stretched huge wires across from one to the other, thus constructing an *Æolian harp*. Ordinary winds produced no effect upon it, but when fierce

storms and mighty winds roused themselves up, and came rushing down the sides of the mountains, and through the valleys, the wires rolled out majestic music. And thus when God would make our lives sublime, He tosses us about in violent tempests, and brings out the deeper and sweeter tones of our better nature. School days are not over with you yet. All through life, be it long or short, we are under training. Whether it be sorrow, or disappointment, or failure, all is intended to lead us to the infinite source of good, where the thirst of the soul shall be quenched forever. Then amid the glories and felicities of the heavenly state, the more painful memories of the life below shall be forgotten or transformed. We are told of a mystic fountain in Florida, the purity of whose waters is such that, though two hundred feet in depth, every object is visible. Beneath its limpid waters the most hideous objects shine with all the colors of the rainbow, as the light passes down the mighty prism of the water. Thus may it be with us in that world illuminated by the light of God, passing through the sea of glory, that all the sad memories we have cherished here shall be submerged in the sea of paternal love, irradiated with the rays of the sun of righteousness.

We know there may be tempests,
And we know there will be showers ;
Yet we know they only hasten
Summer's richer crown of flowers.





The Best Knowledge.

“In much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.”

—Ecclesiastes 1, v. 18.

“This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.”

—John 17, v. 3.

The Best Knowledge,



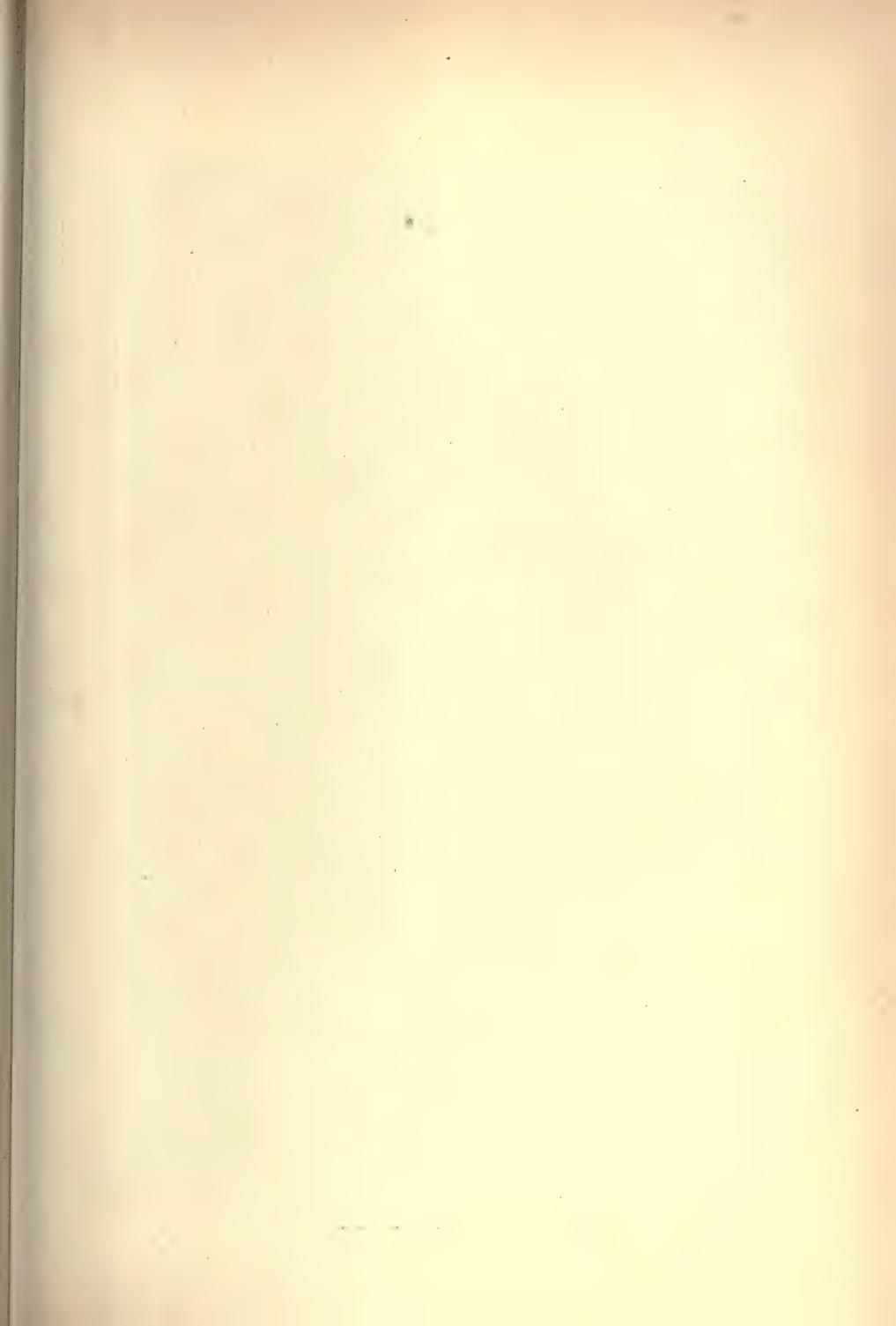
NE of the leading philosophical writers of the age, in discussing the question, What knowledge is of most worth? replies, that it is the knowledge that enables a man to live completely. And certainly if the phrase, "a complete man," is used in its fullest signification, as including the highest development of the moral and spiritual powers of the soul, the definition may be readily accepted. But when we find that all that is meant by a complete life is the mere development of the physical being, and that the culture which more directly aims at ennobling the soul, and moulding the character, is either unprovided for or practically ignored, we must reject such a statement as radically defective and untrue.

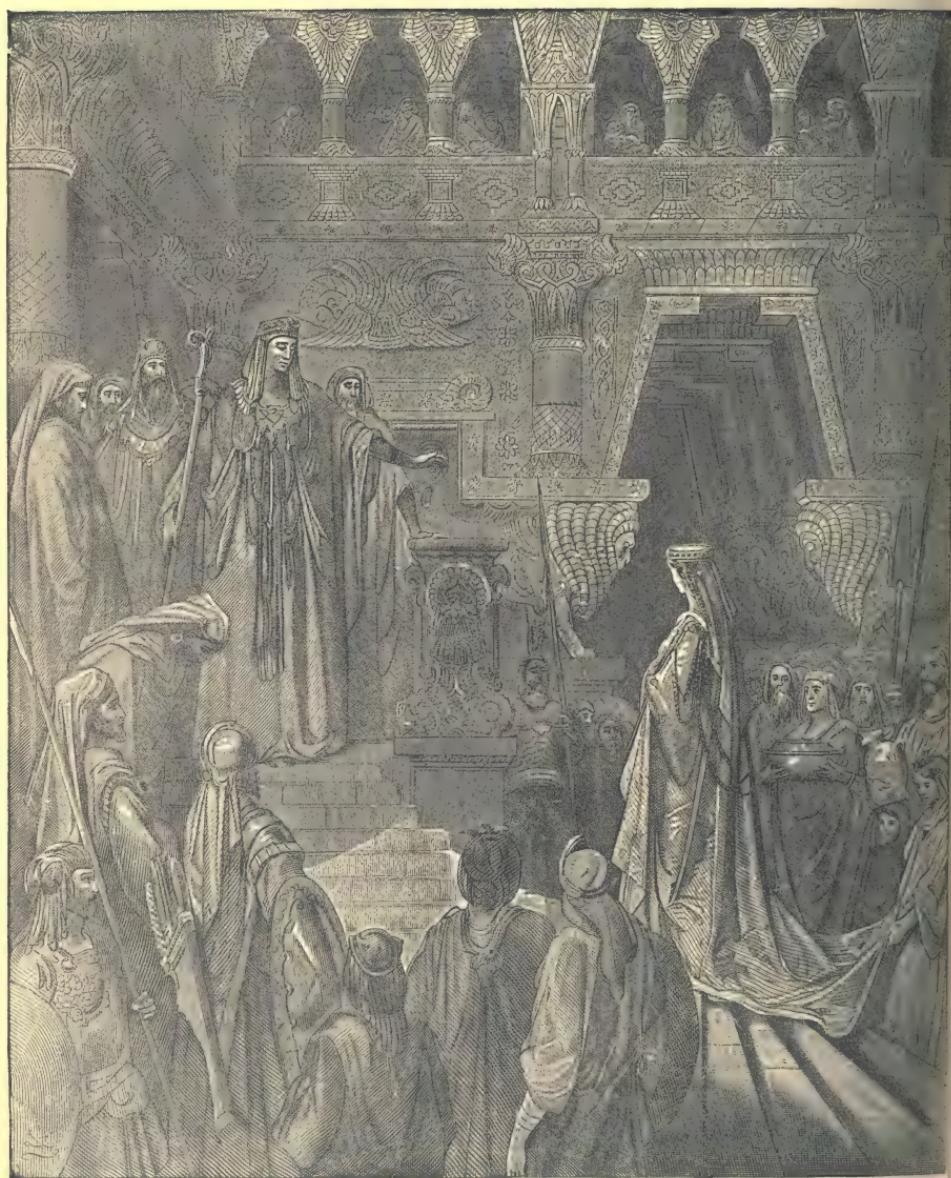
We need not despise physical or mental culture, while exalting a higher education than the schools afford. But there is a knowledge which lies beyond the limits of human discovery—of priceless value and of lasting importance. It leads to and embraces a change of heart, through transformation of the affections, and supreme love to our Maker. Or in the words read: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

Mind is undoubtedly one of the most wonderful things, among the many mysteries of our nature. Scarcely less wonderful is the power of speech, by which we communicate the hidden operations of the mind. But language entirely fails to represent the different shades of thought and feeling, of which the mind is susceptible. Therefore, in all languages, the same word is used to represent many forms of thought. The heathen are said "to know God," and in other passages "not to know God." Knowledge is at one time depreciated as worthless as vanity, and as a weariness of the flesh, while again it is declared to be "life eternal." In such statements there is, after all, no real contradiction. The scriptures speak of two kinds of knowledge: Intellectual or speculative knowledge on the one hand, and spiritual or experimental on the other. These differ in their objects and in their effects. Speculative knowledge is called in scripture, natural knowledge, because possessed by the natural man, and discoverable by the light of nature. A knowledge of science and art; of the productions and phenomena of the natural world—a knowledge of mankind, whether drawn from personal observation or the records of history; a knowledge of the philosophy of mind and morals, considered simply as matters of speculative enquiry,—these are included in natural knowledge. Spiritual or experimental knowledge, on the other hand, is distinguished by the nature of its objects and the state of the recipient's mind. It is due, in great measure, to the influences of a divine power operating upon the mind, enlarging the faculty of perception, and revealing important truths not otherwise understood by unassisted human reason.

Let us briefly point out the superiority of spiritual to that of natural or speculative knowledge.

I. Natural knowledge is insufficient to lead men to a discovery of those truths which are necessary to salvation. The world by wisdom, says the Apostle, knew not God, neither as the independ-





The Queen of Sheba's Visit to Solomon

ent, eternal, and unchangeable. Jehovah revealed in scripture, nor as the Redeemer of men. For ages the world was left to solve the problem, as to what man could do untaught of God, and signally failed in the attempt. Egypt, Greece and Rome--nay, the entire world, with the exception of Palestine, was covered with the grossest darkness, and groaned under false religions and false conceptions of the Deity. "Ye men of Athens," said Paul, when speaking on Mars Hill, "I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with the inscription, 'To the Unknown God.' And what was true of Athens, is true to-day of the heathen world, where the light of nature but reveals the moral and spiritual darkness which prevail.

II. Natural knowledge is insufficient to make men holy. No amount of it can make a man good. The mere knowledge of supernatural truths cannot predispose to a holy life. Men talk about looking up from nature to nature's God, as if nature in itself were sufficient to solemnize and sanctify the soul. To the christian, it is true, all nature speaks of God, but to the infidel, nature's voices are unintelligible. It is not by mere intellectual culture that the world is to be converted and society reformed, but by the gospel of Jesus Christ, brought by the Holy Spirit in contact with the soul of man. Need we quote the testimony of individuals, famous on the page of history, as to the worthlessness of human learning? Take the case of Solomon himself--artist, poet, naturalist, zoologist, moralist, politician, and king, all combined in one--with an eloquence and wisdom that dazzled the oriental world, and yet what is his language? "In much wisdom there is much grief, and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness to the flesh." Take the case of Byron, possessed of fine sympathies and susceptibilities--majestic in intellect, with a genius almost superhuman; and yet with a character immoral, cruel, and repulsive in the last degree, trampling

down the rights of social life—"a lover, yet scorner of his race"—and listen to his own words at the close of his brief career :

My days are in the yellow leaf,
The flowers, the fruit of love are gone ;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone !

Listen to what Sir Humphrey Davy says, himself—orator, poet, philosopher, and world-wide renowned by his discoveries—a favored son of science, flattered by the world, and honored by the great ; yet what were his words amid these very plaudits ? “ *Valde miserabilis ! valde miserabilis !* ”—very miserable ! very miserable ! Hear his last confession in his fatal illness : “ I envy no quality of mind or intellect in others ; nor genius, power nor fancy ; but if I could choose what would be most delightful to me—I believe most useful—I should prefer a firm religious belief to every other blessing. This makes up a discipline of goodness—creates new hopes when all earthly hopes vanish, and throws over the decay and destruction of existence the most gorgeous of all lights, and brings up the most delightful of all visions, when the sensualist and the sceptic have only gloom and decay and annihilation.”

III. Natural knowledge of itself is evil in its effects. It tends to pride and self-conceit. It puffeth up. It makes a man think more highly of himself than he ought to think, so that, wise in his own eyes, he becomes a fool. Conceited ignorance is an offence in the eyes of men ; how much more in the sight of God. Intellectual pride produces self-confidence, and almost invariably tends to scepticism, which results in open infidelity. As Lord Bacon well remarks : “ A little philosophy inclineth man’s mind to atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth men’s minds about to religion.” But apart from the fact that human knowledge is utterly worthless to make men wise unto salvation, is it not true—

IV. That mere intellectual studies are wearisome and unsatisfying. Much study is a weariness of the flesh. Extraordinary attainments, in any one branch of science or literature, cannot be attained but by untiring diligence—constant and prolonged self-denial. Manual labor is not, as many hastily conclude, the severest form of human toil. The sleep of the laboring man is sweet after the exhausting toils of the day, but the study and research of the man of letters is too often followed by sleepless nights and a wasted constitution. He who would gain eminence among his fellows, must not only deny himself many innocent enjoyments, but lay his account to endure positive suffering, from which the mass of men are exempted. Many are the disappointments, too, which accompany such a life. Success is not always gained, even when the faculties are strained to their utmost tension. Often the plodding, persevering student is mortified to find all his hopes frustrated, his plans thwarted, and the much coveted prize snatched from his grasp by some far less-deserving rival. Long tried experiments often end in failure; favorite theories are exploded and overthrown, and results secured altogether trifling compared with the vast amount of labor expended. Nay, even when success rewards the diligent student, the knowledge acquired is far from satisfying. The more we know of our own character, and of the world in which we live, the greater oftentimes is our sorrow. We cannot extend our researches to any great extent, without meeting with sad evidences of the effects of sin, the inhumanity of man, and the fearful ruin of our race. Blood and carnage, cries of distress and despair, tyranny, injustice and oppression, cover many a page in the history of humanity. And, finally, after all our efforts, how little can the longest life accomplish in the different departments of science and literature? The more we know, but reveals the little we actually do know. The further we penetrate the secrets of nature, but reveals mysteries beyond our ken, paths we cannot tread, questions we

cannot answer, depths we cannot fathom ! We know but in part, and that part is very limited. After all our boasting as to the powers of the human intellect and the achievements of the human mind, we have to confess that like children, we are but entering upon the elemental principles of all true knowledge. Were it not for the thought that a deeper, clearer, and more satisfactory insight into the works of God is before us in another sphere, we would stop short at the very threshold of our investigations. Enjoyment there is certainly in studying the works of nature, but apart from the knowledge of the true God it is unsatisfactory and transitory.

This leads me to speak of spiritual knowledge. It differs from natural knowledge.

I. As to its objects. These are above nature, and unattainable by the natural man. Says the Apostle: "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect—not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world that come to naught, but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, for God has revealed them unto us by his Spirit, for the spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God."

II. Spiritual knowledge includes intellectual cognition and appreciation of things revealed. The Scriptures do not deprecate speculative studies. They only teach that they are insufficient to sanctify and save. Intellectual knowledge is absolutely necessary. God does not enlighten men's minds in secular truth by means of miracles, nor does he spiritually illuminate a mind, where there is no knowledge. Intellectual knowledge may be said to be necessary for the Holy Spirit to operate upon. For anything we know, indeed, the glory and happiness of the saints in heaven may be in proportion to their knowledge upon earth. Mind and soul should therefore be used together in our search after truth.

III. Spiritual knowledge is spiritually discerned. The things perceived are the spiritual qualities of the truth. The natural man

takes account only of the intellectual phases of truth. The christian sees from a different standpoint, looks with a different eye, and sees in a different light. A man unskilled in painting may look upon a beautiful picture, and yet not perceive the blending of the different colors and the proportions of light and shade that render it so perfect and pleasing. The very things which, in the estimation of the artist, are the glory of the painting, may have no interest in his eyes. So it is in regard to divine truth. Spiritual discernment is due to the illumination of the Holy Spirit. It is not an objective operation, like the shining of the sun upon the object looked at. It is inward and subjective. The spirit pours celestial light upon the eye balls ; he moves in a mysterious way, in the deep recesses of our nature, rendering the vision clear, and making the most mysterious of Bible truths simple and sure to the believing soul.

IV. Spiritual knowledge is thus blessed in its effects. It produces right affections toward God ; we become like God. By beholding him we are changed from glory to glory ; and this knowledge of divine truth here is followed by the beatific vision hereafter. The knowledge of God is life eternal, and what is heaven but the beatific vision of God in Christ.

Surely such knowledge is better than gold ; more to be desired than rubies ; all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it. It brings with it no remorse, no weariness, no disappointment. Its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace ; while at the close of life it introduces to a world of sinless perfection.

Young ladies of the graduating class.—The Faculty of the college have diligently endeavored, during your term of study, to train you in those branches which are now regarded as essential to educated womanhood. But they have done more. The Institution in which you have spent so many happy days is a christian institution.

It aims at something more than a secular education. It is not trammelled by statutes that forbid the reading and teaching of God's word. Unsectarian and non-denominational in the fullest sense, so far as peculiar doctrines are concerned, it endeavors none the less to emphasize the eternal verities of inspiration which lie at the foundation of all the cardinal virtues, and are the source of all true greatness.

Although no longer under the direction of teachers, I take it for granted that the progress you have already made, will impel you to seek after greater attainments. Let me therefore affectionately counsel you to cultivate in all your researches, a spirit of reverence and devotion. You need divine guidance in order to appreciate the beauties of the present world, as well as to anticipate the glories of the next. While your minds are exercised in the different departments of science, and literature, and art, approach such studies in an humble childlike spirit, and with a sincere desire to glorify the Creator as seen in his handiworks. A firm faith in the existence of God and implicit trust in His Son, Jesus Christ, will not detract from the charms of philosophy. It is very true and sadly to be lamented, that some of the greatest minds in ancient, as well as in modern times, have known nothing of God's gracious dealings with their souls. Able to compute the distances of the stars; to read the history of our race in the records of geology, and dazzle the world with their learning and their eloquence, they have remained painfully ignorant of the way of salvation, through a living Redeemer. But on the other hand, there are many instances of sincere and devoted piety, united with marvellous intellectual power,—where simple faith in the blood of Jesus has shed a lustre around the sublime achievements of the scholar, and afforded sweetest satisfaction in the hour of death. For when called to grapple with the King of Terrors, neither our learning nor our scholarship can avail us aught. The applause and hosannahs of the multitude may be

sweet in the day of health, but 'tis but an empty hollow sound in the ear of a dying man.

But while some of you, doubtless, look forward to a life of continuous study, others, and perhaps the greater number, will be engaged in the more practical duties of life. There are few women in our land who can enjoy perfect leisure and immunity from the ordinary cares of life. Indeed a mere recluse—however vast and varied the subjects mastered—is often of far less value to the world than a less capacious mind. It is better for all purposes that the useful and elegant be combined. It is not the occupation so much as the spirit that actuates the worker, that makes the life noble. Honest effort, if it does not always reap a rich material reward, strengthens and enriches the soul. The true lady is one who can take her place in any station, and command respect in all ; who makes all around her happy by her cheerful, sunny smile and kindly acts ; who, whatever be her circumstances, can say at the close of each day that she has not eaten the bread of idleness. Where there is conscientious performance of duty, the poet's words are true :

Everyday toil is everyday blessing,
Though poverty's cottage and crust we may share ;
Weak is the back on which burdens are pressing,
But stout is the heart that is strengthened by prayer.

Somehow or other the pathway grows brighter,
Just when we mourn there are none to befriend ;
Hope in the heart makes the burden grow lighter,
And, somehow or other, we get to the end.

Finally, and ere you leave this place, where I have often spoken to you on the highest themes that can engage the attention of immortal beings, let me warn you against unholy alliances in after life. To choose riches without goodness is to choose perdition. I cannot say less, when so many promising young women sacrifice the fairest hopes of life upon the unhallowed shrine of mammon. There came recently under my notice a sweet little poem entitled,

“Elsie and the Lady,” descriptive of the misery of a life destitute of pure affection. The lady is looking forward to the day when a coronet will deck her brow, and her hand will lie in that of England’s proudest peer. Elsie, who brings to her mistress her robes of velvet, and toys with her glittering hair, is to marry an humble son of toil, but yet says the peeress :

Her’s will be the brightest home
On all the lady’s land,
For Elsie knows the stately brow,
She binds the gems above—
Unlike her own, will never wear
The diadem of love.

Thus musing upon the mockery of noble blood and liveried servants, who come and go at her command, but destitute of sympathy, which the heart most needs, the peeress mournfully says :

No coronet gilds Elsie’s brow,
Like that which gleams on mine ;
No ermine drapes her little form,
Or gold or jewels shine.
No lips speak loving words to me,
Or stoop to kiss my hand ;
The love is Elsie’s ; mine the place
Of a lady in the land.

Some day the pageant will be o’er,
And at the close of life,
When death shall claim, with stern command,
Both peer’s and peasant’s wife ;
Elsie may wear a crown of gold
Shaped by an angel hand,
And love may warm the lonely heart,
Of the lady in the land.
All love to her, all wealth to me,
Has on the earth been given,
A fairer balance will be struck
Beyond the stars in heaven.

May God go with you, through all the changing scenes of life, and bring you home to His presence above, to receive the reward of faithful service ! Amen.

The Highest Wisdom.

“Wisdom is the principal thing: therefore get wisdom.”

—Proverbs 4, v. 7.

“Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister, and call understanding thy kinswoman.”

—Proverbs 7, v. 4.

The Highest Wisdom.

IN THIS book of Proverbs, wisdom is personified. She is represented as crying without and uttering her voice in the streets, in the chief places of concourse, in the opening of the gates, saying, "how long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity, and fools hate knowledge?" She is represented in the text as clothed with the most attractive attributes. Her merchandise is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof better than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies, and to be sought for as men seek for hidden treasures. She gives to the head an ornament of grace and a crown of glory. Her fruit is better than gold and her revenue than choice silver. To sum up all in the language of the wise man: "Blessed is the man that heareth her, watching daily at her gates, waiting at the posts of her doors. For whoso findeth her, findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord."

The wisdom referred to primarily is beyond the range of academic teaching and training. Elsewhere we read, "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom ;" not meaning that secular wisdom and scholarly attainments are of little importance, but that

without that higher knowledge which God's spirit alone can impart, the learning of the schools is unsatisfying---incapable of giving comfort in the hour of trial and peace in the hour of death.

It is concerning such wisdom that Solomon speaks when he says: "Wisdom is the principal thing—therefore get wisdom—say unto wisdom, thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman." If it cost thee all thy wealth it is worth more than the price paid for it. Get wisdom at any price. Cultivate habits of intimacy with wisdom and understanding.

Addressing more directly on the present occasion, the students of the Young Ladies' College, and especially the graduates who are soon to go forth from its walls, let us regard the text as enforcing the value of wisdom, human and divine, in all the relations and conditions of life.

Wisdom may be defined as knowledge practically applied to the purposes of life. It is that power which enables us to judge accurately and discern skilfully. It is genius coupled with common sense; the power of turning the highest mental attainments into action at the right moment and for the best ends.

In order to gain wisdom there must be: I. Reading and reflection. The reading must be timely, the books select, and the reflection constant. The amount of unhealthy, pernicious literature in circulation at the present day, is astounding, and well fitted to cause alarm. The greatest social evils of our age have their origin in the immaterial and morbid excitement of the imagination, caused by fictitious representations of human nature. The appetite grows as it is fed by sensational novels until body and mind are weakened, and the reason totters on the brink of a hopeless insanity. Young women especially with leisure for mental improvement are thus brought into contact with frivolity, profanity and immorality, which if met with in the living person, would be loathed and spurned. The feeling of repulsion at first experienced is soon overcome, and

the mind gradually familiarized with sin, becomes saturated with impurity, and finally, lovingly lingers over the polluted page.

Are we never then to read pure fiction? Is there no relief from the severe studies of the college and the cloister, in the pages of poetry and romance? By all means. The mind needs recreation as well as the body. There is a large amount of fiction whose healthy tone and invigorating impetus, no one now calls in question. Poetry and fiction have a most important sphere in the development of character and the education of society. Though it may not be the direct aim of the philosophic novelist to teach morality, much that is elevating and instructive is to be found embedded in the sententious sayings that are put into the lips of humanity, as idealized in the creations of the novelist. For, to use the words of another, "Every ideal picture of human life should be so constructed as to bring out three things: first, the hidden greatness and wonder of life; secondly, the unity or harmony of life, and thirdly the moral grandeur that pervades life, and the ultimate triumph of good which is involved in the condition of life." But when we have granted all this, let me add that even the best works of fiction are to be sparingly used. They should never be considered as the staple of our reading, no more than condiments and spices and sweetmeats are to be regarded as the chief sources of our physical strength. The pages of romance may refresh and stimulate a class of feelings that are apt to become callous and extinct, by the constant friction of business and daily anxieties, but beyond this, their use is baneful, and relaxing to a degree that unfit for the honorable discharge of the practical duties of life. It is not in the pages of the novelist that we are to learn the real woes and sorrows of humanity, and acquire that intrepidity of soul that will help us to conquer the uprisings of evil in the heart, and the seductive temptations of the world. Indeed the heart is apt to become insensible to the misfortunes and distresses of our fellowmen, in proportion as

we are amused and fascinated by the highly colored and exaggerated pictures of human wretchedness and suffering, which are painted on the page of fiction.

I cannot but in the briefest terms indicate what books are best calculated to create within you noble ambitions, and render life not only useful but sublime. There are certain books that by universal consent of christian scholarship are recognized as books for all time, and not for the passing hour ; books which contain truths and principles of far-reaching application ; books which illustrate the power of goodness and the dignity of self-sacrifice ; books which bring us into contact with the dead of by-gone ages, and elevate our conceptions of the importance of the present and the nobler existence yet to come. In the study and thoughtful perusal of such books, you will find treasures of wisdom. They will satisfy, while they purify ; they will strengthen, while they adorn the mind.

Now, one of the principal objects of a liberal education is to help us in our choice of books, so that we may discard the frivolous and retain the good. To glance at, far less read, one thousandth part of the mass of printed matter that issues daily from the press, is an impossibility, nor would it be profitable, if practicable. Reading is of little value, save it is accompanied by thought. And unless you have had your intellectual powers so cultivated as to make study and reflection inseparable from reading, your college training has been of little value. To pass dreamily over the pages without mental effort is dissipating in the highest degree. There must be assimilation, or there is no gain of strength, just as the food must be digested to make the blood. Coleridge tells us of four classes of readers. The first like the hour glass—their reading like the sand running in and then out, and leaving not a vestige behind. The second like the sponge, which imbibes everything, only to return it in the same state, or perhaps viler. The third, like the jelly-bag, allowing the pure to pass away, and keeping only the refuse

and dregs. And the fourth, like the slaves in the mines of Golconda, casting aside all that which is worthless, and retaining only the diamonds and gems. To this last class every college graduate should belong. The best of human books that come under notice demand discrimination. To select what is of immediate and lasting value, and reject what is ephemeral and commonplace, is an attainment not reached by every one, but of supreme importance in the cultivation of the mind and formation of character. To educate the thinking powers, as well as to enlarge our stock of ideas, should be the grand aim of all our reading.

"Knowledge is power," says the great philosopher Bacon. It is more than this. It is a great source of happiness. Were it incapable of nobler results than the mere gratification of the individual mind, its possession would be invaluable. There is in healthy literature inherent elements of delight, worthy of being sought after, apart altogether from their humanizing effect upon society at large. Ignorance is the parent of misery and wretchedness, while knowledge and mental culture are the springs of all true pleasure and enjoyment. The man whose knowledge is circumscribed by the events of the passing hour, has gathered no information whereby he may act his part in the world with any degree of credit to himself or profit to his race. The other, assisted by the records of the past, lives and moves in another atmosphere, and acts his part with definite aim and purpose. Brought into contact with the leading spirits of by-gone ages, he imbibes their principles, adopts their views, and becomes associated with them in thought and feeling. The creations of intellect bequeathed to us by the mighty dead enable us to penetrate the mysteries of nature—teach us how to use the powers and faculties of the mind, and thus comprehending in some measure the glorious works of the great I Am, we are led to adore that all-wise and all-powerful Being, whose arm sustains the entire universe of existence. The pages of biography bring us

into sympathy with the noblest of the earth, with characters whose bravery, philanthropy and high-toned morality have adorned humanity and shed a lustre upon our race. If we have a taste for history, with all its exciting themes ; if we love to scan the successive ameliorations which society has undergone, we have only to express the wish to enjoy the pleasure. We can seat the historian by our side, and hear from his lips strange tales of former days—the birth and death, the glory and desolation of mighty kingdoms—the dark deeds of ages of superstition and barbarism, when opposing hosts marched forth to gory battlefields, and offered up their lives on altars of mistaken heroism. Or, if we prefer the muses, we can listen to the sanctified imagination of a Milton, as he paints the angelic glory of the heavenly world, or leads us in measures grand and solemn to the gloomy depths of unutterable woe, where hope has for ever fled. Or we may take for our companions in exploring the secrets of matter, the Newtons and Keplers of other days, and the Bucklands, Brewsters, Lyells and Millers of our own. Guided by such teachers, we may survey the starry vault of heaven,

Those immortal lights which live along the sky,
tracing

World beyond world in infinite extent,
Profusely scattered through the blue immense,

until compared with so glorious a creation, our own earth dwindleth into very insignificance. Or finally, examining the geological strata of the earth, we may gather from its stony records overwhelming evidence of the truths of revelation. The knowledge thus acquired and the happiness experienced in such studies are permanent possessions. Of such an one the poet has beautifully said :

Enter the sacred temple of his breast,
And gaze and wonder there, a ravished guest ;
Wander through all the glories of his mind,
Gaze upon all the treasures he shall find.

II. In order to gain wisdom there must be observation. The mind must be strengthened and disciplined from without, as well as from within. Everything that can educate the eye and ear should be sought after. Many students of books are but superficial students of nature and society. The intense occupation of the brain in private seems to unfit them for recognizing or participating in what is going on around them. Scholarly men, so far as books are concerned—learned beyond the great mass, often walk among scenes of surpassing beauty with no eye to perceive it, and no conception of the adaptation and harmonies of creation. The vastness and mysteries of life in its ten thousand forms, suggest no enquiries and occasion no surprise. The records of the earth written in the stony chronicles of the rock are never read, and the wonders of the starry heavens unfolded by the telescope are never admired. No true student will so act. The reverential and devout scholar sees God in all his works, and admires the unerring design that is everywhere manifested. The smallest flower displays His power and wisdom, alike with the most stupendous of creation's acts. Every particle of dust, in its varied adaptations and changes, bears testimony to that masterly skill and foreknowledge which regulates the world of matter and rules the world of mind.

There is a lesson in each flower,
A story in each stream and bower,
On every herb on which we tread,
Are written words, which, rightly read,
Will lead us from earth's fragrant sod
To Hope and Holiness and God.

There are others, again, who are close and diligent observers of nature, but who are utterly ignorant of humanity, and unfitted for the demands of every day existence. They are theorists and speculatists. They can, according to the laws of mental science, describe the varied faculties and emotions of mind and soul in all their complexity and intricate workings, but they have no knowledge

whatever of men and the movements of society. The influence of such persons upon the great movements of humanity is of necessity comparatively small. A part of their nature is undeveloped. They never expand beyond the class-room, and never gain that practical knowledge which makes the man of letters a controlling force in society at large. Need I say, that sympathy with nature should not be incompatible with sympathy for men, nor the study of books preclude the study of men. Those who have enjoyed the advantages of a liberal education, should take an interest in all that appertains to the well-being of the commonwealth—not only for the good of others, but to acquire that breadth of view and liberality of sentiment which is indispensable to all who guide public opinion. Nor is it necessary to this end, that the delicacy and refinement of christian womanhood should be sacrificed by undue contact with the turbulent factions of the political arena, or the excitement of angry debate. The gentlest characters overpower by their meekness. Soft words and kindly deeds are more persuasive than fiery declamation or pointed steel.

But III ; Bear in mind that no amount of secular knowledge or wisdom, can save the soul or qualify for entrance into heaven. Some men speak as if the rapid diffusion of literature and science, is the panacea for all the ills of life, and the true method for the world's regeneration from vice and sin. The power that is to restore her comeliness and make her Master rejoice, is to be found, they argue, in advancing civilization and the culture of the intellect ; in the development of man's physical and mental constitution and all the accompaniments of well ordered society.

Now, it may be admitted that the more secular knowledge the world possesses, accompanied with the higher ethics of christianity, the more likely is the gospel to be embraced by the masses. In general, the more intellectual a man is, the more capable is he of weighing the evidence which the gospel offers to candid minds, of

its divine character and claims, and the better qualified is he to appreciate the wisdom and greatness of God in the scheme of mercy offered for the acceptance of the guilty. But while this is granted, it is also to be borne in mind that every human system of morality has failed—that nature and science cannot explain many of the most wonderful phenomena in the world around us, and that there is nothing within the range of what are technically termed scholastic studies to satisfy man's spiritual and immortal nature.

Briefly then on this subject—for you have frequently heard the same views presented from this pulpit,—secular knowledge can never elevate men nor purify nations—it can never change the heart—it can never reach the springs of conduct—all the knowledge in the world cannot make the drunkard temperate—the licentious, virtuous—the selfish, generous or the dishonest man just. Many of the greatest philosophers and teachers of antiquity, not only promulgated most questionable theories of morality, but were themselves dissolute and debased. Egypt with her science and astrology—Greece with her statesmen and poets—Rome with her heroes and historians, and China and India with their vast systems of idolatry and superstition, never produced a pure morality. Of itself, secular knowledge helps men to hide their wickedness by simulating piety—to break human laws—and by cunning and strategy evade the penalty. It is the heart and not the head, that controls our destinies and moulds our lives.

The lesson which all this teaches is plain. It is not schools, nor colleges, nor universities, nor literature, nor statesmanship, but the pure Gospel of Christ that is to elevate modern thought and sweeten society. It is not bayonets in heathen lands that raise men from barbarism to the amenities of refined and polished society, but the “wisdom which is from above,” the truth accompanied with the spirit’s power. While, therefore, we endeavor by the highest mental discipline to prepare the youth of our land for honorable positions

in life, it is not to withdraw their interest from that noblest of all books and that grandest specimen of all literature—the Bible. The influence of all other books upon the world have been trifling and unimportant in comparison with what the inspired volume has achieved in the past, and is destined to accomplish in the future. Make this the companion of your solitude, the director of your lives, your constant guide and counsellor, and in anticipation of that happy period, when literature and science shall be pervaded by its sentiments, and reason bow before its shrine, let us join in the prayer of the Christian poet :

Return, O light, return to this thy world,
And purify the human intellect.
How glorious then, when every mental power,
Baptized to thee, and by thy hand controlled,
Shall yield its valued tribute at thy feet.
Art shall adore, and science worship thee,
The pulpit preach the g'ories of thy name,
Philosophy majestic in her steps
Shall bear her priceless treasures to thy throne,
And feel herself exalted to a height
Of unexampled grandeur.
And poetry redeemed from infamy,
Rise to the height of her celestial powers,
And grasping heaven and earth in her embrace,
Sing in melodious thunder, they are one.

Young ladies of the Graduating Class :—I address you collectively for the last time from this place. Before another week you will be scattered far and wide, never more to meet again in the loving relations you have sustained for these many months and years. In the hour of parting I express for myself and all my associates in Church and College work, the most earnest desire for your welfare. Many of you during the past two years have given yourselves publicly to the Lord Jesus Christ, and entered upon the enjoyments of christian life. In now passing out from the guardianship and necessary restraints of student life, let your conduct be such

as will assure the world that your profession has been sincere. When Hedley Vicars returned to his home in England, after his conversion, it is said "the heart of his widowed mother sang for joy, as she marked the exceeding grace of God in her son." I trust that the loved ones in your different homes may see an amiability in your conduct which mental culture never can produce. An educated woman, whose heart has been divinely possessed, has possibilities of vast influence. Her opportunities are many and her responsibilities great. Nor can she ever engage in a nobler work than devoting her highest attainments to the advancement of God's cause and kingdom upon earth.

Your attainments in literature and science are varied, and so will be your acquisitions in grace. Where one gains the prize in earthly pursuits, many fall short. But in christian service there is not only a place for the humblest agent, but none come short of a glorious recompense. You may not all occupy prominent positions, but you can conscientiously do something in your different spheres to add to the sum of human happiness. The rippling streamlet moves not for itself alone, but adds its quota to the mighty ocean, where fleets of ships carry the merchandize of the world. And a soul fired with holy zeal may put in motion mighty forces, that shall move society and elevate the race. It is indeed pitiful to see how many educated women, at the close of their college curriculum, enter upon lives of fashionable folly, and act as if existence were a masquerade, and toil of mind and body rude and vulgar. Education has certainly not served its purpose, when it leaves man or woman supercilious, haughty, indolent and sluggish; far less, when it leads them to devote precious time and talents to trifling employments that are unworthy of an immortal soul. The experience and reward of her who dreams life away in luxury and voluptuousness, and by plunging into scenes of excitement and passion strives to suppress the thought of a coming judgment, must be sad indeed.

She has chosen the world
And its paltry crowd,
She has chosen the world
And an endless shroud ;
She has chosen the world
With its misnamed pleasures,
She has chosen the world
Before heaven's best treasures.

We hope better things of you, though we thus speak. When you go back to your several places of abode, let your sunny smile and happy temperament cheer and beautify your several dwellings ; disappoint not the fond hopes of parents and friends, who now rejoice with you in your joy ; live so that you may be missed and mourned when death calls you home, and then it shall be said to you : " Well done, thou good and faithful servant : thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things : enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."



The One Thing Needful.

“Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things ;
but one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part, which
shall not be taken away from her.”

—Luke 10, v. 41.

The One Thing Needful.



HE narrative from which the text is taken illustrates a striking characteristic of our Lord's teaching: that of deducing practical truths, and enforcing spiritual lessons from the most common-place occurrences of every day life. Nothing connected with humanity was beneath the Saviour's notice.

Christ was on a visit to the sisters at Bethany. He was their intimate friend, and gladly shared their hospitality, giving them in return words of commendation or gentle rebuke as occasion demanded. Mary and Martha, although sisters, moved in entirely different spheres, and were cast in different moulds. Their tempers and dispositions were exceedingly unlike. Mary was the type of the contemplative christian. The serenity and repose of her countenance indicated the holy calm that reigned within. She seemed too gentle for this world—one of those angelic beings, whom God sends once in a while to bless the world, before they take their flight to their native heaven. In the world, she was not of it. She was absorbed in higher themes than earth afforded. Her love had

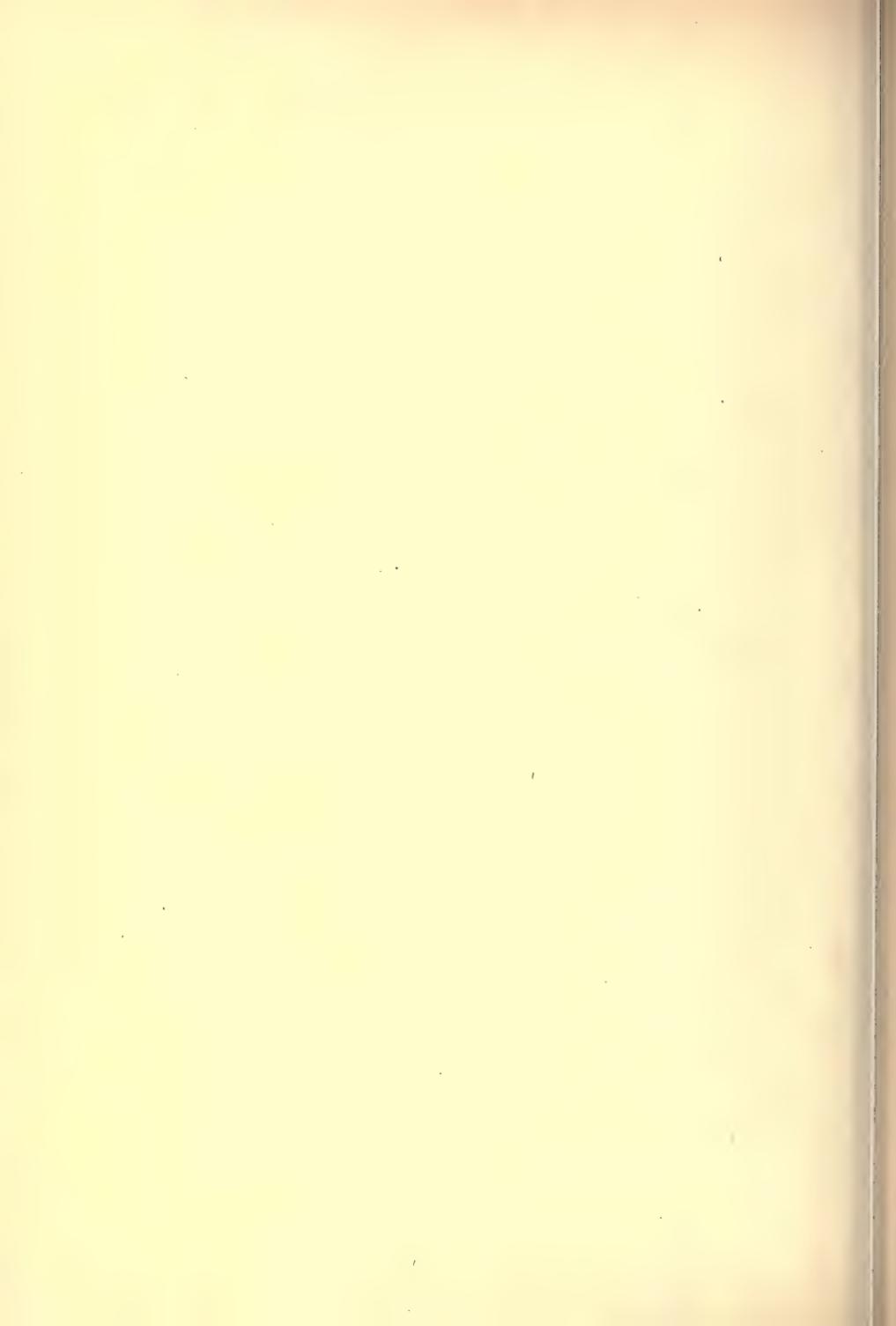
heights and depths, but little outward expression. She sat at the feet of Jesus drinking in the words that fell from his lips, and in silent worship bending down before the adorable Redeemer. On the other hand, Martha was the type of an active, energetic, self-denying and self-sacrificing christian. When Christ came to Bethany, nothing was left undone that could possibly minister to his comfort. She made the house ring with her quick flying footsteps, and with her practical turn of mind was admirably suited for the cares of the household.

Both sisters were sincere followers and friends of Christ, although they manifested their love in very different ways. Mary gave evidence of her regard by simply listening and looking into the face of Christ—Martha by busying herself overmuch to show kindness to her Lord. Such was the aspect of the family at Bethany when Christ uttered the words of the text. Martha had been bustling for hours, attending to the wants of the household, when she came upon her sister Mary, who was sitting in calm composure at the feet of Jesus. She seemed annoyed that she should take so little interest in what, to her, were matters of great importance ; and in a spirit of censoriousness said : “Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone ? Bid her therefore that she help me.” Jesus reminds her in his reply, that while this present life demands attention, there is a nobler existence which must not be neglected. While the poor perishing body must be fed, the yearnings of the immortal soul must also be satisfied. For as he elsewhere says : “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

I do not understand the words addressed to Martha to be such a direct condemnation of her conduct as some affirm. Indeed, it is open to question whether Jesus rebuked Martha at all. There are two different ways in which the language may be construed. “Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, of



MARY AND MARTHA.



comparative minor importance, but Mary has chosen the good part —has done right in contrast with thy wrong," or "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things"—which is commendable, but Mary's course, though different from thine, is also commendable, for she hath chosen the good part." Martha is nowhere represented as a selfish, worldly woman, but a genuine child of God. It was Martha, standing near the grave of her brother, who said: "I know that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the son of God, which should come into the world." The common idea that Jesus had a decided preference for Mary over Martha, and that pensive, meditative, passive christians, are better than active, healthy workers, is not sustained by the text. Christ loved both the sisters. Martha's error lay not so much in her activity and zeal, as in the seemingly unjust reproach she cast upon her sister Mary. She thought that Mary was idle when she sat at the Saviour's feet, while Jesus assures her that the highest service upon earth is communion with heaven. We are not hastily to conclude that all christians must have the contemplative character of Mary to ensure the Saviour's commendation. Some can never be like Mary, and others can never be like Martha. Grace, while it ennobles the affections, purifies the desires, and gives to life a grander and higher aim than before conversion, does not recreate the natural constitution. It leaves the man of active, sanguine, impulsive temperament as active and as busy as before, but it turns the energies of his nature in another direction. It leaves the man of reserved and meditative mind as reserved and studious as before, but places before him grander subjects than the philosophies or sciences of the earth. The world at the present day needs both types of character. She needs her Moses and Aaron and Hur, praying upon the mount, and her valiant soldiers fighting in the

valley ; her Johns as well as her Peters ; her sweet persuasive preachers, as well as her sons of thunder. She needs men and women, who by the omnipotent power of a holy life prove the reality of religion, as well as her consecrated ministers upon the watch towers of Zion. There is room for all, and a place where each one may do his part. Only let the active cultivate a spirit of devotion, and the contemplative dedicate their talents to the practical duties of a holy life. As the poet says :

Be Martha still in deed and good behavior,
In faith like Mary at his feet forever.

The question has often been debated whether society is most indebted to men of thought or men of action. Both are necessary. "The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee." That form of piety that works upon visible materials, and that which works upon the invisible :—the piety which is developed toward this world, and that which is developed toward the other world,—are each in their own place, working out the same grand designs. The one is busy with acts—the other with thoughts ; the one is doing—the other is pondering. The Marys who sit at the feet of Jesus, know not how much they owe to the Marthas, who take the burden of the household cares ; nor do the Marthas realize how much of their success in the busy activities of life, is due to the Marys, who by their secret intercessions, call down upon them the benediction of heaven !

Now, the tendency of the present day, it seems to me, is to copy Martha rather than Mary. The intense activity of the age is producing a class of women, who, if not equal in faith to Martha, have in a large measure her spirit of censoriousness and fault-finding. They are cumbered with much serving, not at home, but in committee rooms and other public places of resort. And, because others have not the same gifts or tastes, they rebuke them for being indifferent to the claims of humanity. These women are doubtless

clever and voluble—they have little sympathy with delicate feelings, and are at home in all the externals of religion. They can pray and preach in public—rebuke and exhort—canvass from door to door like trained politicians, and courageously withstand criticism and reproach. To use the words of another, “They are never cool, but when in hot water, and never sleep, but as a top on the spin.”

We do not question the piety or zeal of such workers. As the sappers and miners of the army, they do the roughest work of Christianity. But let them not forget that there are more ways than one of serving Christ. In a grand organ no two pipes give forth the same sound. Yet the same breath gives voice to all, and all are made to speak by the same master, each pipe according to its size and voicing. “The little piccolo that makes the melody glitter as if a bird were singing in mid air, is doing quite as well as the deep bass tones that uphold all tunes.” A strife, arising among the pipes, because one speaks oftener and louder than another, would not be more foolish than are the uncharitable judgments passed upon the best of women by their stronger and less sensitive sisters. Because a woman cannot speak on a platform—cannot grasp the details of business—cannot besiege the strongholds of sin according to the modern style of assault—let it not be said that her life is in vain. Constant activity of the kind so popular at the present day is far more dangerous than protracted devotions. It is calculated to rob woman of all that is gentle and amiable, and to lessen that indescribable influence which she possesses in society, not by mingling with party combatants, but by standing apart and silently rebuking existing wrongs. The Marys have their functions in the church and the world, as much as the Marthas. “The Marthas supply the business-like prose—the Marys the poetry of religion. The Marthas rear the needful things of life in the garden of the Lord—the Marys cultivate its flowers. The Marthas serve

the meals of the household of faith—the Marys bring the costly spikenard. In the divine ceremonial, the Marthas give the sacrifices, the Marys the sweet incense ; and as “the house was filled with the odor of her ointment,” so the spiritual temple of God is fragrant with their perfumes. If the refinement and sensibility of the Marys did nothing else than breathe a softness into, and spread a bloom over service and work, otherwise hard and coarse, they would still be precious.

Remembering that Christ’s words were addressed to a christian woman, it surely cannot be out of place to ask the questions, are not many of God’s people cumbered with much serving, and careful and troubled about many things? Is there not a danger of allowing personal piety to decay by over-much attention to inferior concerns? The evil is not in being busy, but in the method—the extent—the objects which engross the attention. The business of life and the distractions and harassing cares of the household and the world, unfit for spiritual enjoyment, and steal from us precious hours that should be sacred and devoted to fellowship with the unseen. The demands of daily existence and the abundant missionary efforts and enterprises which evangelical churches are engaged in, have the tendency to make us forget personal piety. We lack the depth of religious feeling, and the glow of piety which prevailed in earlier times. While cultivating the vineyards of others, we are in danger of neglecting our own.

Now, says Christ, one thing is needful. We need the working activity, and we also need the silent tenderness. We are not to spend all our time in meditation, but we are to go about our work without undue noise—moving as the planets, with their calm light and placid majesty, around the orbs of heaven. Addressing as I do, those who stand upon the threshold of active life--who are soon to mingle in society, and leave their impress for weal or woe upon companions and society at large—need I say, that many things are

needful. Culture and education of mind and manners are needful : purity of soul and chastity of lips are needful : grace in deportment and gracefulness are needed : decision of character and womanliness are necessary,—firmness in resisting evil—tenderness towards the unfortunate and sympathy for the afflicted are needful ;—in a word, whatever will make your lives more illustrious and commendable in the sight of God and man. “ Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” “ Covet earnestly the best gifts,” but yet, as the apostle adds, I show unto you a more excellent way. Recognizing eternity in the near distance, only one thing is needful,—a simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and child-like reliance upon the promises of the gospel. What was needful in the days of Martha and Mary, is needful now. We have no new gospel to offer, and no other remedy for the salvation of the soul. All other schemes have failed. “ Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

This is the one thing needful, for if not possessed, there is nothing else that can supply its place. Earthly riches are not to be despised, and the good opinion of our fellow-men is desirable, and rectitude of life is praiseworthy, but none of these things can atone for past sins, or secure our acceptance in the great day of God. The young ruler who came to Christ had all these qualities, but in the end was a castaway. “ Men who content themselves with mere negative righteousness, will at last find heaven’s gates bolted upon them with a double bolt.” It is needful to live by. Supposing there was no other existence beyond the present, faith in Jesus Christ, and a life devoted to the requirements of the christian religion, are a positive advantage. “ Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” It is needful to die by. Even Baalam the false prophet

admitted this, when he said : “ Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.” To many of you death seems far in the distance, and need not for many years be anticipated, but as Seneca says, “ Though death is before the old man’s face, yet he may be as near the young man’s back.” If it find you out of Christ no power can save you. The one thing needful is available now, not then. “ Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near.”

Away then—Oh fly
From the joys of earth !
Her smile is a lie—
There’s a sting in her mirth.
Come, leave the dreams
Of this transient night,
And bask in the beams
Of an endless light.
For the human heart
Can ne’er conceive
What joys are the part
Of them who believe.

If you would have an old age calm and beautiful, you must, like Mary, sit much at the feet of Jesus. Never neglect private devotion—never neglect daily communion with God through His Word—never let a day pass without aiming to do something for the good of others. Longfellow, the American poet, in a pleasant letter to a friend, recently wrote : “ To those who ask how I can write so many things that sound as if I were as happy as a boy, please say that there is in this neighborhood a pear tree planted by Governor Endicott 200 years ago, and that it still bears fruit, not to be distinguished from the young tree in flavor. I suppose the tree makes new wood every year, so that some part of it is always young. Perhaps that is the way with some men when they grow old. I hope it is so with me.” The morning of life improved prepares us for a long day of usefulness, and ensures a golden sunset. “ Those

that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age ; they shall be fat and flourishing."

Young ladies of the graduating class,—This evening, as undergraduates of the college, you listen for the last time to my voice. Although we have no certainty when we leave the house of God at any time that we shall all meet again, there is an almost absolute certainty in present circumstances that we never shall. It is, therefore, to speaker and hearers a solemn moment. I cannot but feel that your future conduct has been to some extent moulded and directed by the impressions made in this place, nor can I cease to follow you with my fervent prayers and fondest wishes. I look beyond this little span of life to the judgment seat of Christ, and I ask myself, shall our relations to each other be as pleasant as they have been during past years ? Shall we continue to study together those higher problems that belong to the exalted state beyond the grave ?

My relations to you have been—as friend, teacher and pastor—of the happiest kind. There has been unbroken harmony from the beginning to the end of your college course. And now, ere you leave, allow me to say, that the brightest adornment of woman's character is piety. I have admired your lady-like deportment, your devotion to study, your progress in knowledge, and your purity of conversation. But above and beyond all these, I charge you to seek holiness of heart, without which the brightest attainments and the most fascinating graces are worthless. I have no cause to doubt that you have already chosen the good part, which shall never be taken from you. Some of you have been led under my ministry to give yourself to Christ, and all of you, I feel, are in heart the Lord's. My dear young friends, do not stand upon the threshold of the christian life, debating as to what is the path of duty, but constrained by Him who died for you, give yourselves, body and

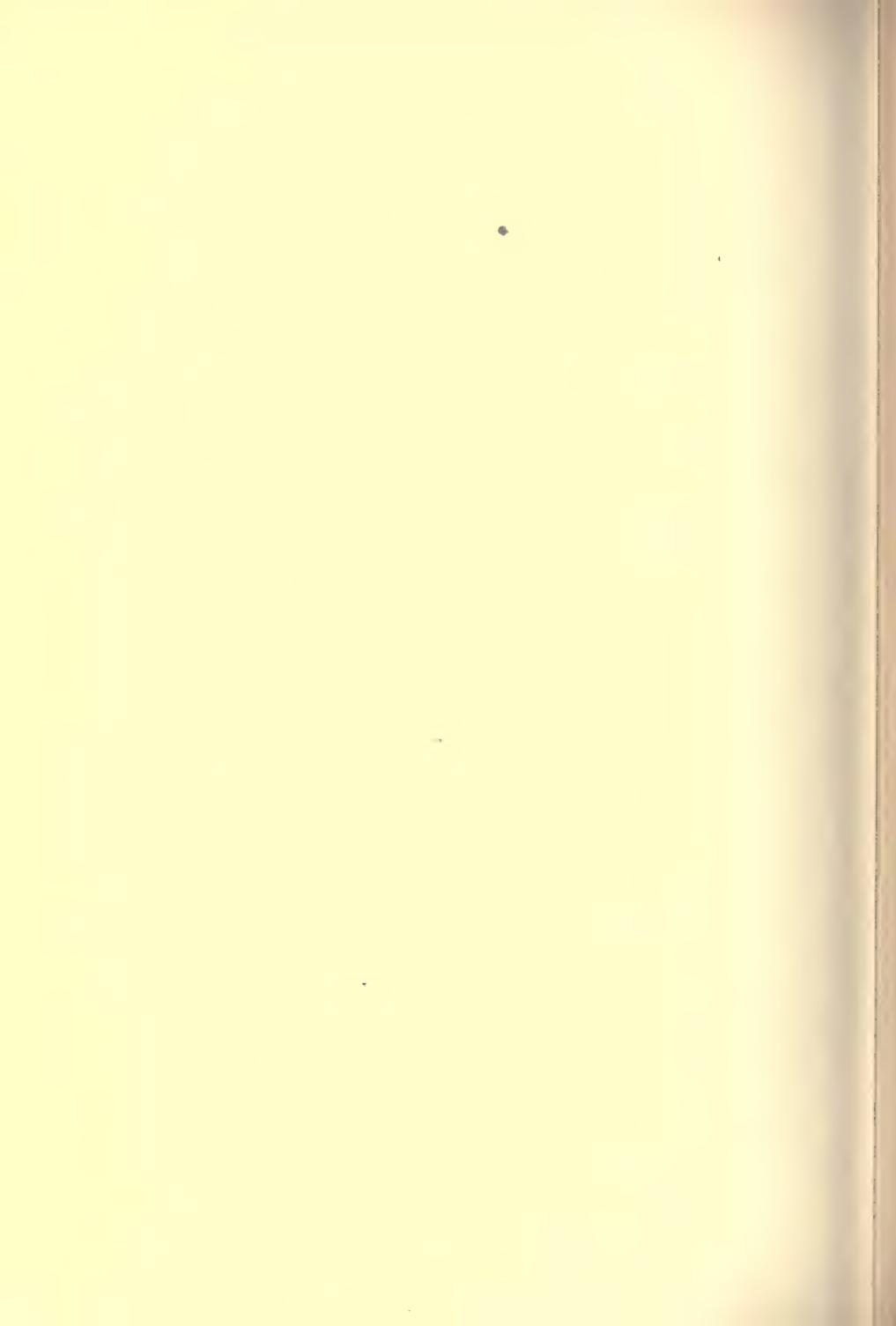
soul and spirit, to the service of Christ, for time and eternity! Life is brief. Although since the establishment of the college no death has occurred among the students, there have been many breaches in your households. Fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, have been taken. What do such visitations teach? That our time on earth is uncertain—that our opportunities for work are fast passing away. “Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest.” The present is to you the seed time of life. Upon it depends what your place shall be, and what part you shall act in coming years. Improved, it will render life memorable and useful. Unimproved or misimproved, it will fill the heart with woe, and the memory with sorrow.

There are gains for all our losses,
There are balms for all our pains,
But when youth, the dream departs,
It takes something from our hearts,
And it never comes again.

Something beautiful is vanished,
And we sigh for it in vain,
But it never comes again.



RELIGION AND THE STATE



Saint Andrew's Day.

* “One of the two which heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is being interpreted the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus.”

—John 1, v. 40, 41, 42.

* This discourse, and the following five, were addressed to the Saint Andrew’s Benevolent Society, of Brantford.

Saint Andrew's Day.



HE day carries us back in memory to martyr times. On the thirtieth of November, St. Andrew, now known as the patron saint of Scotland, died, after two days' suffering upon the cross. The history of the Apostle is comparatively brief. From the Gospel record we learn that he was a native of Bethsaida, a town of Galilee, on the shore of the lake of Gennesareth :—that he was a fisherman by occupation, and brother of the Apostle Peter. While prosecuting his business, he became a disciple of John the Baptist, and finally was called by Christ to become a fisher of men. From the passage before us we also learn that he was one of the two disciples who accompanied John the Baptist, when looking upon Jesus, the preacher of the desert exclaimed : “Behold the Lamb of God.”

Having been baptized he became a follower and disciple of Jesus. His name is mentioned as present on several important occasions when Christ manifested his miraculous power, notably at the marvellous draught of fishes, and when the five thousand were fed with the five barley loaves and two fishes. Having at the com-

mand of Christ left his fishing boat he gave himself entirely to the work of the Apostleship. From the pages of history we learn that taking Scythia and the adjoining countries for his province, he travelled over Cappadocia, Galatia and Bithynia teaching and preaching the gospel and baptizing converts to the faith. Thence we follow him to the Euxine sea, to Nice, Nicomedia and Chalcedon and other parts, where he met with great discouragements, and suffered fierce persecution, chiefly at the hands of his Jewish countrymen. On one occasion an attempt was made to burn the room in which he dwelt. He was also treated with savage cruelty, beat with clubs, pelted with stones, lacerated in the flesh, and cast without the city as dead. Having recovered, he resumed his work, travelling over large tracts of country until he came to Byzantium, the modern Constantinople, where he founded the first christian church and ordained the first Bishop of that place. Banished again out of that city, he went over Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly, Achaia and Epirus, and finally came to Patrae, a city of Achaia, where he sealed his testimony with his blood.

The immediate cause of his martyrdom was the effects of his preaching upon the populace. Multitudes of the inhabitants having renounced Paganism and embraced Christianity, the pro-Consul denounced him as an innovator and propagator of that superstition, whose author the Jews had crucified upon the cross, and threatened him with like crucifixion, should he continue to seduce the people from sacrificing to the gods. Refusing to desist he was cast into prison. Rejecting all overtures of clemency, conditioned upon his abjuring the christian religion, sentence of death was passed upon him—a death preceded by the most excruciating tortures which have ever been inflicted upon mortal man. First he was scourged, seven lictors in succession lashing his naked body, and then, in order more surely to add to his agony, and task the invincible patience and fortitude he had exhibited, he was commanded to be

crucified—not fastened, however, with nails to the cross, as was customary, but with cords, so that his death might be more lingering and painful.

Arriving at the cross, he spoke cheerfully of his approaching end—that he had long desired and expected that happy hour—that the cross had been consecrated by the body of Christ hanging upon it, and adorned with his members as with so many inestimable jewels ; that he came joyful and triumphant to it, that it might receive him as a disciple and follower of Him who once hung upon it and be the means to carry him safely to his Master and Redeemer. Having hung for forty-eight hours upon the cross, he prayed earnestly that he might depart, and seal the truth of his religion with his blood, which he did on the last day of November, towards the close of the first christian century.

It is of little importance why St. Andrew, rather than any other of the Apostles, has been chosen as the patron saint of Scotland. The mythical and marvellous stories invented, concerning his bones may be passed by as part of the superstitions of a by-gone age, characterized by the worship of relics, and pilgrimages to the tombs and shrines of martyrs. More important is it that we should study his life, and endeavor to emulate his labors for the good of men and the glory of God. A society that takes his name ought to have such objects in view as are in keeping with the religion and practice of the apostolic age.

St. Andrew was possessed of an earnest desire to benefit his race. Saved himself, he was eager to bring others to a knowledge of the truth. He did not hide his light under a bushel, but regarded himself as under obligation to make converts wherever his lot was cast. His earliest efforts were put forth in behalf of his own relations. “He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, we have found the Christ.” Nor did he rest until he had brought him to Jesus. Thus having been instrumental in adding

another one to the little band of Christ's followers—one who became a mighty man of faith and valor—he was prepared to go to the regions beyond, and preach the gospel alike to the heathen and Jewish world.

This society, then, on behalf of which we plead, is a christian society. It is the product of that religion which Christ founded in the world, and which men like St. Andrew were commissioned to preach.

It is indeed the only system of religion that has made systematic benevolence a part of its piety, and enforced upon its members the duty and privilege of caring for the bodies, as well as the souls of men. Paganism never taught its devotees the charity and humanity of the New Testament. Deism has no place in its creed for the true exercise of such emotions. Nor have the most polished and cultivated nations of antiquity ever recognized or fostered such impulses. You search literature in vain, prior to the advent of Christ and the promulgation of christianity, for such language as is used by the Apostle James when enforcing the royal law of love. "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of His Kingdom. If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, 'Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled ;' notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful for the body ; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."

We glory in the benevolent and patriotic institutions of our land—our hospitals—our asylums for the blind, the deaf and dumb, and the insane—our homes for the incurable and for the inebriate—and our educational system, which has no superior in the world. And we have cause for gratitude that we live in an age and in a country where such things exist. But to what are these due? They are the natural results of those grand fundamental principles, enunciated by Christ in his sermon on the mount—principles which are

fast becoming the accepted creed of every nation under heaven ; and among which stands pre-eminent, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

As a Christian Society, it recognizes the brotherhood of humanity—that God hath made of one blood, all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth ;—that the body politic is one and hath many members, and that we are each dependent, the one upon the other. "The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee ; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. The members should have the same care one for another, and whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it ; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it."

This principle was literally accepted and acted upon by the early Apostolic Church. After the day of Pentecost, "they had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need." In our day, and in the greatly altered circumstances of society, such an equalization of this world's goods may neither be desirable nor practicable. Communism, as now advocated, is antagonistic to Christianity, and subversive of law and order. But the poor we shall always have with us, whatever be the commercial condition of the country. "The poor shall never cease out of the land," said Moses to the Israelites, prior to their occupation of Canaan ; "therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy." Nor ought we to regard appeals made in their behalf as vexatious. The rich need the poor as much as the poor need the rich. It is hard to say which is most benefited by the commerce of human sympathy that passes from the one to the other. "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord ; and that which he hath given will he pay him again." Not as a ground of self-righteousness, but as a practical evidence of our holy religion, let us covet the high distinction claimed by the patri-

arch Job: "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me ; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness of me. Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy."

I appeal to-night in behalf of a society which has for its main object the succor of the poor and the helping of the friendless and unfortunate. As such it has a special claim upon the natives of Scotland and their descendants in Canada. In the dispensing of charity its object is two-fold ; to give at this season of the year timely assistance to the widows and families of Scotchmen, who have been left to fight a hard battle against poverty, and who are exceedingly reticent as to their pressing wants ; and next to aid Scotchmen who have been reduced in worldly circumstances by no act of their own, and who are forced to wander from place to place in search of work. I can testify to the good that this society has accomplished during the past year in both these respects. Every dollar of members' fees and other monies collected, have been sacredly devoted to the relieving of the poor. Nor has this been done indiscriminately. Every case has been minutely examined, and only the really deserving have been aided.

I enter into these details, for I am aware that there are some Scotchmen, who, instead of aiding, rather depreciate the work of this society. Fault finding is so easy and so useful, when the claims of such societies are urged, that I do not wonder it is so. There are men who have reasons always at hand for refusing aid to every good object in the church and out of it. They give nothing to Home Missions or Foreign Missions—to christian associations, or St. Andrew's Societies. They refuse to give to the one class of objects, because they are denominational, and they refuse to give to the other, because they are not denominational. With such

men it is folly to reason. They are so encased in selfishness as to be deaf to all appeals. But there are other good men, who stand aloof and refuse to associate with such societies, from a feeling that they accomplish but little in the way of relieving the distressed. Need I say that even were it so, such an attitude is unpatriotic and unwise. Imperfections adhere to every society on earth. The Church of Christ itself is far from a perfect organization. But just in so far as such national benevolent societies are capable of improvement in the details of management, do they appeal to the best men in our community for support and counsel. Every Scotchman who has a particle of love for his native land, should be enrolled as a member, and cheerfully assist his brethren in the noble work of rescuing the perishing and giving food to the famishing, who are bound to us by the tender ties of blood and kindred.

I will not waste time to discuss the oft-repeated absurdity that English or Irish or Scottish societies foster bigotry, and detract from that pure fervid love of our adopted country that so becomes us. Those who talk so, seldom do anything for their country, and are the first to leave it when danger threatens. Apart from the actual charity disbursed from year to year, such societies by their annual celebrations not only preserve the hallowed memories of other days, but help us to value all the more highly the land which the Lord hath given us. Surely it is becoming to think well of and speak well of our native soil,--while at the same time we bend our energies to build up new nations, that are destined to perpetuate, and it may be, excel the glory of the past. National pride, when subject to reason and justice, and void of annoyance towards others, is a virtue. Apart, however, from this consideration, the existence of such societies is a necessity in our land. Where they are rightly administered by skilful officers, they afford relief to the deserving poor and the distressed in times of need, while they prevent imposition and dishonesty. And to the man of most slender

means, they present an opportunity of sharing in the honor of preserving that noble independence which has so long been associated with Scottish character.

We are comparatively a young nation. As such we have the making of our character, and the adjusting of our taxation. Anything that fosters self-reliance, industry and independence, should be regarded with favor. Once a man becomes so destitute of self-respect as to prefer the workhouse to an honest livelihood, his usefulness as a member of society is at an end. If you ask of British statesmen what is the greatest drain upon the national exchequer, and what is the greatest social problem of the age, they will answer —pauperism. The time was, when in Scotland paupers were almost unknown. Half a century ago, when George the Fourth visited Edinburgh, he was so struck with the well-dressed and comfortable crowds of people that greeted his arrival, that he asked where all the poor people were. But a change rapid and alarming has taken place since that date. Now, we are told, one in nine of the population is more or less dependent upon state aid. How is this to be accounted for? Pauperism has beaten philanthropy! No country in the world has more charities than Scotland, but the more numerous the charities the faster is the increase of misery and destitution!

The lesson taught us is plain. It is not by legalizing pauperism or building workhouses that we best promote thrift and industry; but by rendering timely aid to those who, if neglected too long, may lose heart in the struggle for existence, and become permanent burdens upon society.

Surely then I need say nothing in behalf of such charity. Many whom I now address look back upon the time, when strangers in a strange land, sympathy and aid, however small, was encouraging, and breathed hope into the heart. It is not the amount so much as the spirit that prompts the gift that is valued by the honest, but

hard driven sojourner. It is the feeling that poverty is not a crime, and that there is help and respect for those who bravely set themselves to conquer in the struggle of existence, and win an honorable name among their fellowmen. By some of us, I fear, it is considered wicked to be poor, as has been well said by a writer in a weekly journal: "In church we avouch the blessedness of poverty, and accept with fervor all the fine things that can be said about it. But this is poverty in the abstract. Picturesque poverty—long ago poverty, mellowed and tempered with the halo of ages, and not the actual poverty of the day is the sort of thing we associate with beatitudes. On Sunday when it does not intrude itself in church, we half admit that real poverty may be cousin-german to scriptural poverty. But that impression does not survive Monday morning. Then our sentimental notions are dissipated, and we act in a manner that implies that the rich are the salt of the earth, that to "get on" is the true kingdom of heaven, and that misfortune is a sin!"

It is sad, but true, that the only alternatives offered, to a very large proportion of the population of Scotland, is emigration or poverty. And of those who by dire necessity have been compelled to leave their native land, many have risen to distinction. They have proved themselves:

A manly race
Of unsubmitting spirit, wise and brave,
Impatient, and by tempting glory borne
O'er every land—for every land their life,
Has flowed profuse.

Brethren, we cannot afford to refuse charity. I put it on the low ground of one's own interests. The heart demands some object to call forth sympathy. We need to be brought into contact with poverty and suffering that the higher and tenderer emotions of our nature may be exercised. The poor and the rich are equally and mutually dependent. The poor need the rich to help them—the rich need the poor to expand their sympathies and develop the

grace of benevolence. Nay, even when we know that our alms have been misapplied, if we have given in the right spirit, we are abundantly rewarded, although the gift has been abused.' The man who systematically refuses aid to the poor and perishing, because he has been repeatedly imposed upon, is impoverishing his own soul, and will eventually become a sordid and avaricious devotee of the world, as dead and dormant in his affections and sympathies as the Egyptian mummy of the Pyramids, that has been hidden for many thousand years in the damp and gloomy vault.

Do I need to stimulate the members of this society and christians in general to the practice of charity? Have you never felt the joy of doing good, that costs some sacrifice and self-denial? The act may after all be insignificant, but like spring flowers, it breathes forth the sweetest incense. Ah! there are men and women here, I fear, who never make sacrifices to help the Lord's poor, and seldom give the smallest mite out of their abundance to mitigate human suffering. I have known professing christian women, who could weep by the hour over the latest novel, with its imaginary case of disappointed love, and yet the next day "turn away with cold indifference from the homeless orphan, whose bony hand is extended for charity, and whose very rap pleads with an eloquence stronger and more touching than words." I have known not a few, who aimed to be leaders of the fashionable world, and were never absent from "the opening day" at our millinery stores—who were too poor to give a dollar to a bereaved family and sent the starving beggar from the door, without even a crust of bread! And I have known professing christian men, who could spend large amounts in political contests, and in costly entertainments, who begrudged their paltry dollar to aid the members of this society, in helping their poorer brethren and sisters in the cold of winter! The riches of such men shall yet be corrupted and their garments moth eaten. Their gold and silver shall become cankered, the rust of them shall

be a witness against them, and shall eat their flesh as it were fire. Ye who dispise the Lord's poor ones, and close your ears to the pitying cry of want, and steel your hearts against their pressing importunities, hear what the Almighty says: "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom. He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker; but he that honoreth Him hath mercy on the poor. If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren, thou shalt not harden thy heart nor shut thy hand from thy poor brother; but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him. For the poor shall never cease out of the land; therefore I command thee saying: Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor and to thy needy in thy land."

Far above all national considerations, the grand motive that should impel us to every act of charity is love to the Master we profess. Our gifts are not so valuable when given from other motives. No man can love his fellow-man with unselfish affection, who does not love his Creator. It is a sense of our indebtedness to sovereign grace that makes the heart overflow with sympathy and tenderness towards the unfortunate. In the person of the poor we tenderly touch the heart of the Saviour, who will not forget our acts of self-denial. "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; sick, and ye visited me; in prison, and ye came unto me. Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Presuming that you count it a far greater honor to be members of Christ's Church, than of any society on earth, permit me to say, that our work is only begun when we have cared for men's temporal wants. Andrew brought his brother to Jesus. Our fellow-

men may not lack this world's goods, but every human being, whatever his outward circumstances are, needs a Saviour from sin. And when occasion offers, if we do not follow the example of the apostle, we are unworthy of his name. "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have I give thee," said Peter to the lame man, who begged alms at the temple. He received more than he expected ; for immediately, at the bidding of the apostle, he rose up, walking and leaping and praising God. And thus may we also be instrumental in ministering to the more claimant necessities of the soul, while we care for the body. In this, christianity has greatly the advantage of secularism, which looks no farther than the present life. It regards man as immortal—as possessed of yearnings and aspirations, which time can never satisfy. It teaches that while the bread that perisheth is needful for present sustenance, the bread which cometh down from heaven can alone appease the hunger of the soul. Of that bread, if a man eats, he shall never die.

There are two extremes to be avoided in dealing with the poor. One is, unduly pressing upon them religious obligations when hunger remains unsatisfied, and when they are driven to desperation in their endeavors to provide the necessities of life. The other is, abstaining entirely from all reference to religious matters when dispensing our charity. Many good people, lacking in tact and common sense, create opposition and destroy their good intentions by untimely conversations on the most solemn topics that can engross the mind ; while others, forgetful of the one thing needful, satisfy themselves by providing for temporal wants alone. Not thus did Christ. By a wise and wonderful use of the common blessings of life, to illustrate the deeper wants of man's spiritual nature, He never failed to call attention to the imperishable treasures at God's right hand.

Christian citizenship, my bréthren, is a vast responsibility. To live as related to both worlds—to shrink from no burden imposed upon us by the commonwealth, while at the same time loyal to the higher claims of heaven, is a task which few of us discharge. God grant us increasing grace and wisdom to act with due regard to both.





HOW BEST CAN WE
Provide for the Poor?

“Blessed is he that considereth the poor ; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.”

—Psalm 41, v. 1.

“For the poor shall never cease out of the land ; therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in the land.”

—Deuteronomy 15, v. 11.

“What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled, notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.”

—James 2, v. 14-17.

How Best Can we Provide for the Poor?



E ARE accustomed to think that poverty belongs only to a modern age, and that it is mainly the result of inordinate selfishness and greed, which makes one portion of society the prey of the other, and yet we find, in the land that flowed with milk and honey, and where the people were directly God-governed, that the indigent and poor were found, and made a peculiar charge upon their richer brethren. Nor are we to expect that it will ever be otherwise.

In all conditions of society, and in every age of the world, there will be the poor and destitute, who depend for their precarious support, or for such help as enables them to live, upon the kindness of others. It is of God's appointment that it should be so. "The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich ; He bringeth low and liftest up." "The poor shall never cease out of the land : therefore I command thee, saying : Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in the land." In the spirit of such statements, we find that under the Jewish law provision was made for the poor of the congregation of Israel. "Six years thou shalt sow the land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof ; but

the seventh year, thou shalt let it rest and lie still ; that the poor of thy people may eat." "When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. Thou shalt leave them for the poor and the stranger." "If there be among you a poor man, of one of thy brethren, in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother ; but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth." In the New Testament we also find the members of the Apostolic Church sharing their substance with their poorer brethren. On the day of Pentecost they sold their possessions, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. The churches of Macedonia were specially distinguished for assistance rendered the poor saints at Jerusalem. "Beyond their power they are willing—praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the ministering to the saints." And in this connection the Apostle Paul states the grand motive to the exercise of christian charity. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."

The scriptures abundantly show the care which the Almighty has for the poor. He forgets not their distresses ; He hears their prayers ; He maintains their rights ; He delivers them from expected ill, and is their refuge in the day of trouble. This care of the poor is also a duty devolving upon all God's people. To neglect it is inconsistent with the christian profession, and is accounted neglect of Christ himself. "Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me."

Doubtless in many cases poverty is the result of indolence, drunkenness and prodigality. Begging has become a profession. If the statements we read in the newspapers are true, "the tramp"

moves about with as much precision and order in his calling as the most energetic and pushing commercial traveller. The land is mapped out, and assigned to mendicants, according to their experience and proficiency in their calling. That there is much truth in such statements, every householder in town or city will be ready to corroborate. At certain seasons of the year they swarm like the locusts of Egypt, but in every season they are abundantly plentiful. They meet in bands at the corners of our streets, where they consult and plan out the campaign ; then separating, take their respective beats, and meet again at an appointed rendezvous, to divide the spoils and count their gains.

As a class their physical man belies their calling, for life in the open air and plenty of good food, and the absence of hard labor gives them a hearty and ruddy appearance that cannot be approached by our respectable mechanics. And when winter draws near and they find pedestrian exercise uncongenial, then our jails are open to them, where they are comfortably housed and fed until spring again sends the brood broadcast upon a long suffering people. It is for such vagabonds that we need a workhouse in the city where they should eat their bread by the sweat of their brow, and learn by hard experience that honest industry is better than penal labor.

We may take it for granted that the duty of providing for the poor is admitted by all good men. But how best to bestow our benefactions and relieve the distressed, while at the same time preserving the spirit of independence in the recipient, is a question which to-day, as in past years, has taxed the ingenuity and baffled the most thoughtful students of political economy. In the nations of the old world the problem has now been well nigh given up as beyond solution. Pauperism has become a legalized gigantic fact, and tens of thousands have no desire, as they have little prospect, of

providing for themselves an honest living apart from the aid afforded by the State.

Now the texts quoted recognize the poor as having a just claim upon the care of society; but qualify the benediction bestowed upon the alms-giver. "Blessed is he that considereth the poor," who remembers them in their destitution, and prudently disburses his means for their relief. In the original it reads: "Blessed is he who acteth wisely towards the poor." It is not indiscriminate giving, without knowledge of the character and condition of the applicants, that is spoken of, but compassion towards the deserving poor. To act wisely towards the poor demands an amount of penetration and keen insight of human character that is rarely found. The pitiful cry of the hypocritical vagrant can hardly be distinguished from the real tale of woe. Nor is it always possible to investigate thoroughly the numerous cases that appeal to our sympathy. As a rule, we are apt to bestow our benefactions upon the most unfortunate and persistent, who are often found the most inveterate falsifiers and the most consummate knaves!

There are two methods which may be resorted to, for assisting our poor, the compulsory or the voluntary. Both of these have been tried, and although the former is almost universal in the Old World, it is not because it has been proved the best, but because Christian men and Christian churches rid themselves of a duty which properly belongs to them and not to the state. The history of English pauperism proves that legalized charity but increases the evil it seeks to cure. As Dr. Chalmers said, when pleading for the voluntary system of support, as against the compulsory: "It generates a feeling of security as to future maintenance, altogether independent of present character or conduct. It destroys that strongest of all natural incitements to industry and prudence which operates when a man knows that if he do not work, or if he thoughtlessly squander, he and his family must starve. It relaxes the obligations

of friendship and relationship, throwing upon the public for support those whom it should be the pride and pleasure of their own children or other relatives to sustain ; and it weakens the force of all those kindly sympathies which want or suffering is sure to awaken in every neighborhood, where nature is left to her own unchecked operations. It checks the private ministrations of the wealthy, who the more they give upon compulsion, have the less to give upon the impulse of compassion. It strips of its true character the charity which it enforces, leaving nothing to spontaneous generosity in the giver, and awakens a sentiment very different from that of gratitude in the receiver."

The same is now as true of the United States. Fully one-half of the taxes raised are for the support of penal, reformatory, or benevolent institutions, and this amount is becoming larger year by year. There is a feeling of alarm at the increasing pauperism, and a well-grounded belief that instead of helping the helpless it is ministering to vice, and indolence, and crime of every kind and degree. Still further, and in perfect harmony with the views expressed in these pages, it is added : " People in general, kind, soft-hearted, and so far conscientious as they are, feel it to be enough to provide for the accommodation and support of those who are thought incapable of self-support. They do not think it necessary to trouble themselves with enquiries as to whether their charitable contributions really effect the good intended. They give, and that is sufficient. If there is maladministration or positive waste and thievery, they are not responsible. The result has been that, according to the authorative statements of those who have given great attention to these subjects, fully one-half of the money expended in the United States for public, charitable and penal establishments has been wasted through the ignorance and roguery of the officials, unchecked by sufficient, competent and honest superintendence, and the soft hearted ignorance of indiscriminate givers and the impulsively sympathetic."

In the efforts of Governments to raise the masses from threatened poverty and degradation, it has too often been forgotten that in every improvement in the individual and the mass, the moral must take precedence of the economic. If we wish to civilize heathen lands, we must first instil in the minds of the natives the principles of practical godliness, and upon this broad foundation, base all subsequent efforts for their amelioration. Or, if we wish to benefit the unfortunate in lands already civilized, and to some extent christianized, we must seek not simply to mitigate present evils, but to remove the cause or causes of these evils. This has not been done, I venture to say, by that system of legalized charity, better known as the "Poor Laws of England." So far from bettering the condition of those for whom these laws were framed, the system has been pronounced an almost total failure by some of the cleverest intellects of that land. So far from removing the causes of social misery, the "Poor Laws" have swelled the number of the wretched, and prevented the operation of more effective remedies which nature has provided for the relief of existing misery. What are some of the radical evils that have followed and are certain to follow every system of legalized charity? First,—There is a gradual undermining of that manly spirit of independence, which is one of the best guarantees for national prosperity. As in the natural, so in the moral world,—a healthy vigorous plant needs no support. Stays and props and ligaments but prevent its free growth. Nature intended that the root should be strong enough to support the stock, and should supply sufficient sap to the farthest extremity. So it is in society. Once you teach a man that the community in which he dwells, or the national treasury, will provide for all his wants, and the manifold necessities of his family, you lay a dead weight upon his energies and choke that spirit of self-reliance, which rightly exercised, produces bone and sinew in the individual and solid virtue in the nation. I do not assert that invariably this has

been the result of legalized national charity. Exceptional cases there doubtless have been, where, but for these same poor laws, inconceivable misery and destitution would have followed, but numerous cases have come to light where the national charity has become a premium for indolence and parental indifference, and where worthless parents, refusing to provide for the necessities of their children, have handed them over to the guardianship of the poor. Second,—This system of legalized charity has actually increased the wretchedness and improvidence of the poorer classes. So far from ameliorating actual suffering and gradually healing the ulcer, the very fact that Government has bound itself to provide for the idle and indolent, has tenfold increased their number. The most shameful expedients and subterfuges are resorted to, in order to share parochial relief. If the poor law overseer refuses to meet the demands of some able bodied scoundrel too lazy to dig but not ashamed to beg—on the ground that provision can only be made for married men and their families, then straightway he goes and marries, and compels the parish not only to support himself, but to provide for his family! Or if support is denied on the ground that the claimant has personal means of support, he very soon removes this objection by squandering his all in dissipation in order to become a permanent burden upon the nation. And finally—for we cannot enter at length upon this wide subject—the system of English pauperism has reduced the wages and lowered the honorable status of the honest, well-doing workingman. By supplementing wages with a certain grant from the national exchequer, the most mischievous and deteriorating influence has been exerted upon the body politic. “Let a man be ever so industrious and ever so sober, and ever so prudent, it is absolutely impossible for him to better his condition, so long as pauperism sends forth her myriads of laborers to compete with him at any price, however low, which the employer may offer. How then are we to save our young and ris-

ing country from such evils? By the efforts of this and other kindred societies, to call into play the sympathies and affections of our common nature; by stimulating that spirit of honest and honorable independence which trusts to its own efforts rather than depends upon the aid of others, and not only thinks of the future, but provides against it.

In this young land of ours, at all events, there should be no necessity for any method of compulsory provision for the poor. We have not such a dense population, that renders individual and voluntary aid an impossibility. The land can more than maintain all that will come to our shores for the next century, in comparative comfort.

How then, do you ask, are the poor, the indigent, the unfortunate, in a word, the really well deserving, to be helped? I answer, by national societies, such as that of Saint Andrew's, caring for necessitous emigrants from the old world, and as far as possible beyond this, ministering to the wants of their poorer countrymen resident in the city; and by each church supporting its own poor. Shame upon the churches of this city, Protestant and Roman Catholic alike, if they cannot relieve the state of this burden. So far from regarding this as a hardship, it should be considered an honor and a privilege to supply the wants of their poorer brethren.

The experiment of relieving the poor in such a way has been tried, and found eminently successful. For ten years it was carried out in St. John's Parish, Glasgow, by Dr. Chalmers, and the result proved that if all the churches had followed his example, the poor of that city would have been cared for at an annual expense of \$60,000, as against \$600,000, paid by the city. That was some fifty years ago. In that same city, from 1840 to 1849, the population increased about 20 per cent., and the cost of pauperism increased 430 per cent! Since that date the population has increased in a vastly augmented proportion, and pauperism has more than kept

pace with it. Of course such a scheme depends altogether upon the watchful vigilance of those who administer the funds, and demands considerable labor, but surely in no better cause can the executive ability of christian office-bearers be employed.

But while I earnestly commend this and kindred societies, as worthy of generous support, let it not be imagined that any society can fulfil our personal obligations to the poor ; when we have done to the very utmost, as societies, there will always be found opportunities for unostentatious acts of kindness. Thank God that it is so. We need for our own good to be brought into contact with poverty, that our sympathies may be drawn forth, and our better nature enriched. Associated charity is good, but acts of benevolence done by the individual are better. The benediction of the text is pronounced upon him, who in addition to his support of public charities, allows no case of want to appeal to him in vain. " He that hath pity on the poor lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given, He will pay him again." As the poet says :

We can all do more than we have done,
And not be a whit the worse ;
It never was loving that emptied the heart,
Nor giving that emptied the purse.

Every rich man, after having provided reasonable legacies for his children, ought to appropriate what remains for the good of his fellow men. In so doing he is but fulfilling his part as a steward of God's bounties. In two ways we may do this : while we live or at our death. The former is surely the wisest method. It is better to enjoy the present luxury of making others happy around us than to die, leaving behind a vast fortune, to be applied by others to objects of religion and benevolence.

But it does not require that a man should be a millionaire to enjoy the blessedness pronounced in the text. The privilege of doing good belongs to no one class exclusively. If we give in pro-

portion as we possess, however small may be our contributions to charitable purposes, we receive a recompense as much as the most liberal minded philanthropist, who gives his million to the poor. Large and princely benefactions strike the imagination and call for public eulogy, but in God's sight the motive and the ability, rather than the gift itself, are recognized.

What is benevolence? Need I say that it ranks among the noblest of human virtues. It is not simply charity, but it is an unselfish love of all mankind, whenever and wherever opportunity offers. Or if we retain the word, let it be accompanied with the description of the poet :

True charity, a plant divinely nursed,
Fed by the love from which it rose at first,
Thrives against hope, and, in the rudest scene,
Storms but enliven its unfading green,
Exuberant is the shadow it supplies,
Its fruit on earth, its growth above the skies.

In the exercise of this God-given excellence, John Howard went forth to the prisons of Europe, "when despotism sat at the gate holding the keys, and when pestilence cowered in the vaults, filling them with death ;" Florence Nightingale hurried forth to the hospitals and camps of Balaklava and Sebastopol, to minister relief to dying soldiers and tenderly close the eyes of husbands and brothers, over whose pillow no widowed wife could weep, nor tender hearted sister lavish tears ; and David Livingstone spent a long and noble life in the jungles of the African forest, ministering to the bodies and the souls of enslaved humanity. Benevolence is a nobler virtue than mere pity and compassion. The purse may be opened and the hand outstretched with the alms of charity while the soul remains cold and chilly, like a northern iceberg that rears its head heavenward in proud defiance of the glorious sun. And need I say that the field for the exercise of christian charity is ever increasing. Kind words, cheerful countenances, prudent counsels,

and friendly assistance ;—the cherishing of love and good will between man and man, and the smothering of petty jealousies, which foster hatred and revenge—all these come within the range of genuine benevolence. Between the extremes of society it effects a solid and lasting union. “ It carries the rich to the cottage of the poor, and allows the poor admission to the palaces of the rich, and both become the richer, because to both there is an accession of happiness. The wealthy obtain the pleasure of doing good and of knowing that there are hearts to bless them, the indigent obtain the relief of urgent necessities and the pleasure of loving a gracious benefactor.” As the poet describes the blessedness of charity :

Meek and lowly, pure and holy,
Chief among the blessed three ;
Turning sadness into gladness,
Heaven born art thou, charity !

Fity dwelleth in thy bosom,
Kindness reigneth o'er the heart ;
Gentle thoughts alone can sway thee,
Judgment hath in thee no part.

Hoping ever, failing never ;
Though deceived, believing still ;
Long abiding, all confiding
To thy Heaven'y Father's will.

Never weary of well doing,
Never fearful of the end ;
Claiming all mankind as brothers
Thou dost all alike befriend.

Amid gigantic schemes of reform, and comprehensive measures for the amelioration of social evils in the nation, we are apt to overlook the not less urgent claims of those to whom we are affiliated by the ties of blood and a common ancestry. I love and honor that cosmopolitan spirit, which, overlooking the narrow boundaries of creed and country, is at all times ready to succor the distressed. But, at the same time, we have no sympathy with that form of

charity which only gives to far-off objects, neglecting the not less claimant cries of home and kindred. That "distance lends enchantment to the view" is a maxim, the truth of which we see too often exemplified in our efforts to reach the sinking and sunken masses of our land. "God help the poor," is an expression frequently found upon the lips of a certain class of sentimental religionists at the approach of winter's cold embrace and in seasons of commercial depression. The prayer is orthodox ; but when, as is often the case, nothing more is offered upon the shrine of charity, it is despicable hypocrisy. I know, and rejoice to know, that the age is advancing in generosity, but notwithstanding, there are still found in every community amazing numbers largely endowed with this world's riches, whose niggardliness and hard-heartedness is a disgrace to our common humanity. As a compensation for their uncharitable natures, "they are much given to theoretical piety, great in prayer-meetings, church meetings and Bible meetings, with an absorbing interest in certain formal and doctrinal points, which do not change the nature, nor require a change of nature. They profess to be very anxious for the heathen, and on rare occasions give sixpence at missionary meetings, but their sympathy for the poor at home exhales in tracts and talk. These are, it is true, edifying to the receiver, but they cost nothing to the giver. If they were accompanied with a basin of broth, or a cup of jelly, or a comfortable swathe of flannel, it would be different, but then the earthly would be mingled with the spiritual—and the earthly costing money is abhorrent to such skin-flints, who are always rich in spiritualities, which are inexpensive luxuries." It is so far well, that such misers leave behind them the means to perpetuate their memories and record their names on monumental urns and tablets ; but certain it is, that the widow's sigh and the orphan's tears will never disturb their slumbers in the grave !

It is only professional men, whose duties call them to homes of penury and want, that can paint the pictures of wretchedness that everywhere exist. We know well that brave and manly spirit of independence, which fires the Scottish breast and chokes the cry for want. Many would prefer the companionship of the dead rather than make known their sorrows to the living. But even among these, are there not some who would gladly avail themselves of the modest charity of this society, and gather the crumbs that fall from the well plenished tables of their more prosperous countrymen? Our land has not yet realized that fearful stage of human misery, which compels five hundred women annually to throw themselves into the river Thames.

Mad with life's history,
Glad of death's mystery,
Swift to be hurled,
Anywhere, anywhere
Out of the world.

But young as is our country, prosperous as is its commerce, and abundant as are the fruits of the earth, how often do we meet in our wanderings with the old and careworn sons of toil, the weary, desolate pilgrim, far from the land of his birth, the home of his youth and the graves of his ancestors, while his palsied tongue seems to whisper the sad feelings of his heart:

I've seen you weary winter sun
Twice forty times return,
And every time has added proofs
That man was made to mourn.
O, death! the poor man's dearest friend,
The kindest and the best!
Welcome the hour my aged limbs
Are laid with thee at rest.

Blest be the arm that stays the trembling frame—that smooths the furrowed brow, and dries the tears of aged want! If his eyes shall never more gaze upon the scenes of youth, if his bones may

not mingle with sacred dust, reposing peacefully across the wide waste of waters, oh ! let his lonely journey to the grave be cheered by a brother's voice ; let his ears hear once more the rude, but to him sweet dialect of his beloved Scotland—let his pillow be guarded by the eye of affection, and his body laid in its narrow house by the hands of Scotia's sons. Who has not wept when reading the sad and plaintive cry of the Scottish maiden, as she breathed her last among strangers in a foreign land :

My ain dear mither little kens
 Her Mary is sae ill,
For 'tween us there's a weary gate
 O' stormy sea and hill;
And will I never see her face,
 Or hear her speak my name,
Or clasp my arms about her neck—
 Oh, it's hard to die frae hame !

I thank ye a' beside me here,
 For the love ye've shown to me,
Ye've gien me meat—ye've gien me claes,
 And gien a gentle fee :
To think o't makes my heart grow grit,
 And makes me feel like shame ;
But yet—forgie me if I say't—
 Oh, its hard to die frae hame !

Christian men have a two-fold mission in the world. 1st, to evince the sanctifying power of true religion in their hearts and lives ; and 2nd, to prove its reality before the world, by active efforts in behalf of the sorrowing and downcast.

Genuine faith invariably produces holiness. Perfect purity outwardly and inwardly is not to be expected in the present state of being. But the line of demarcation between the followers of Christ and the mass of ungodly men, should be patent to every eye. They are commanded to be holy as Christ is holy—to have the same mind in them that was in Him—not to be conformed to the world—but to be transformed through the renewing of their mind—using

it but not abusing it. A christian is a holy man. Amusements, pastimes and indulgences which occupy the time of other men, are to be discarded, and sensual pleasures despised. His entire deportment is to be a reflexion of his Master's life, so that whether he mingles in social fellowship, or transacts business in the market place, or takes part in the church of God, no man shall mistake the sincerity of his devotion and the incorruptible character of his integrity. Just as the fragrance of the rosebud in the garden spreads its sweetness all around, so the perfume of a holy life is to be such, that even ungodly men shall be constrained to acknowledge the grace of God, in the person of his saints, and those who scoff at the doctrines of the Bible be compelled to admit the purity and surpassing excellence of christian ethics.

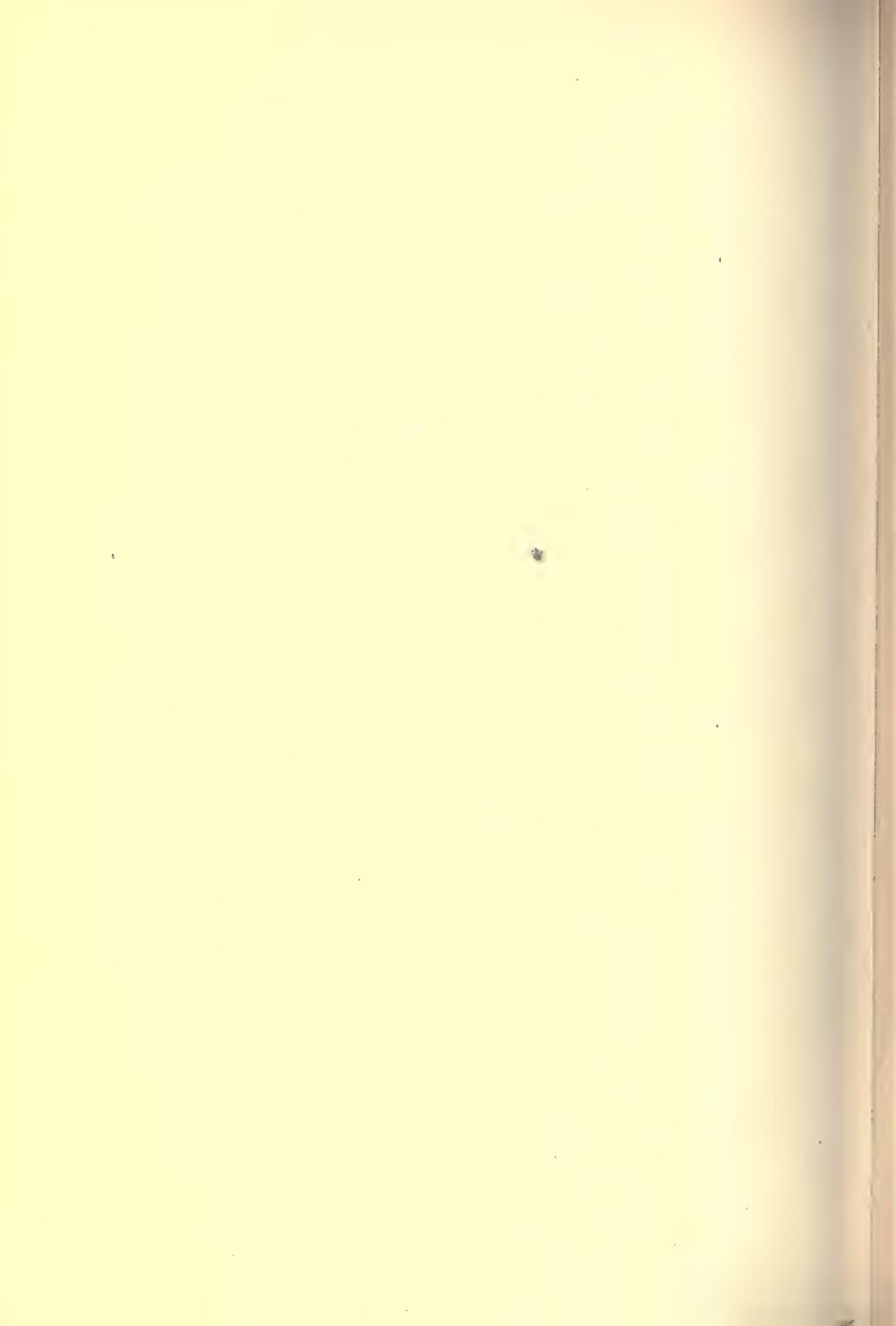
But this is only part of the christian's duty ; he is next to prove the reality of his faith by his works. The life of the child of God should be a perpetual sacrifice for the temporal and spiritual good of those around him. He is not to rest contented with the enjoyment of personal comforts, but to spend his time in scattering blessings all along his path ; in cheering the downcast, comforting the mourning, consoling the bereaved, pouring joy into stricken hearts, and drying up the tears of the widow and the fatherless ; as David says, " making wells in the valley of Baca." Such is everywhere the representation of Scripture as to what constitutes a living faith. Orthodoxy is good—denominational zeal is good—but without large hearted charity it is worthless. That form of religion which is only exhibited in the House of God, and in the public relations of life, where men's actions are canvassed and their good deeds are recorded, is an abomination in the sight of God. It is good to speak of Christ and preach salvation at deathbeds ; good to distribute tracts in crowded lanes and tenements of our densely populated cities, but it is well to remember that the poor have bodies as well as souls, and that access to the latter can oftentimes only

be secured by kindness bestowed upon the former. It is easy to express pity and compassion, and make flaming orations brimful of tender emotion for the sufferings and woes of our fellowmen, but it is quite a different thing to exercise practical every day religion—to go about as Christ did from door to door doing good, making the widow's heart to rejoice and causing the orphan's tongue to sing for joy—this, says the Apostle, is the best of all evidences of our growing likeness to the Saviour.

At all times there is ample room for the exercise of christian benevolence. In the church and outside of the church; in our own immediate neighborhood, and in the world at large, the calls are many and urgent. Our duty is plain. We are not to stand by and deplore the miseries of starvation, without extending a helping hand. The ties of our common humanity and the sympathies of our nature, apart altogether from our christian profession, should prompt to speedy action. We are the keepers of our brothers' bodies, as well as their souls, in so far as acts of kindness can mitigate their sorrows, and deeds of generosity cheer their hearts. Nor, indeed, does it matter much who they are, to what church they belong, or whether they have ever professed faith in any church. Whilst the "household of faith" have first claims upon our benevolence, our hearts should be large enough and our sympathies tender enough to embrace the whole family of the suffering. Church boundaries, and denominational differences, and sectional lines, should never render us insensible to the cry of want. On the battle field the soldier binds up the wounds of his dying brother, though but recently he may have been his deadly enemy. So likewise should Christ's disciples. When the tear of sorrow appeals to your heart; when the tattered beggar, or homeless orphan, or sorrow-stricken widow stands at your door, begging a crust of bread, an old cast-off garment or coverlet, to protect her and her fatherless children from the chilly blasts of winter, be not insensible to the cry

of pity. Do not let sectarian bigotry or national exclusiveness, or that spirit of distrust and suspicion and over-cautiousness, which is so prevalent, steel your hearts against the claims of the suffering poor. Be it yours to compassionate. It is Christ-like. Thus will you make religion more lovely and attractive in the eyes of the world ; thus will you enrich your own souls, and ensure for yourselves the eulogium of Him who has said : "Forasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."





A Religious People,
—AN—
Heroic People.

“The people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.”

—Daniel 11, v. 32.

A Religious People an Heroic People.

IN THIS chapter the prophet foretells a period of great tribulation, consequent upon the struggles of rival monarchies for supremacy, when every form of iniquity and oppression should flourish. Of the Macabees and their followers, whose wonderful sufferings under repeated persecutions, the page of history narrates, and their singularly grand and noble bearing against fearful odds, it is said:—“The people that know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.”

The idea expressed in the text is that experimental, personal, saving knowledge of God, as a friend and helper in times of trouble nerves to unflinching endurance of wrong, and heroic deeds in behalf of right; that religion gives tone and vigor to conduct; that strength of mind is pre-eminently a characteristic of religious natures, while timidity, cowardice and indecision belong to men of no fixed principles, and no abiding faith in God.

Before applying this thought to nations in their corporate and collective capacity, we may for a moment look at it, as illustrated in the case of individuals. We shall thus find that courage is not incompatible with holiness and meekness, and that none are so brave

in times of danger, as those who, consciously weak in themselves, are strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

Moses is described as one of the meekest men that ever lived, the very last to become a leader, and fight the battles of two millions of bondmen. When called to confront the King of Egypt, and demand the liberation of the Israelites, it was not in the spirit of mock humility that he said : " Whom am I that I should go unto Pharoah, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt ? " but from a conscientious feeling of his utter inadequacy to the task assigned him. But once assured that God was with him and would give him utterance and boldness, he never faltered in his mission until the song of victory was sung by Miriam and the daughters of Israel, and the horsemen of Egypt were silent under the waters of the sea. Gideon, the instrument in the hands of God, of saving Israel from the Midianites, is another example of holy courage. The promise of Jehovah : " Go in this thy might ; have not I sent thee ; surely I will be with thee "—enabled him, though least in His Father's house, to smite the Midianites as one man. " The sword of the Lord and of Gideon " put thousands to flight, as the three thousand blew their trumpets and broke their pitchers. And so of David, when selected as the champion of Israel against the great Goliath. He had no confidence in his own personal bravery, skilled though he was in the use of sling and stone. There is a marvelous representation in marble of the young David, by Michael Angelo, in the city of Florence. He stands with firm foothold, yet with his whole frame drawn back as if to gain momentum for the stone that is in a moment to speed on its errand of death. The furrowed brow and eyes set intently upon the giant show him aware of the awful crisis, and that all Israel is breathlessly looking on ; but the firmly set lips also disclose the fact that the God of Israel is nerving him within. His courage was supernatural. " I am come to thee in the name of the Lord of

Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied." And not to multiply illustrations, it was in the same spirit of reliance upon God's presence and favor, that Elijah confronted Ahab, challenged the priests of Baal, and proved the might of Israel's God. "What shall I more say, for the time would fail me to tell of those who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of aliens."

In apostolic times, the defiant bearing of such men as Paul, before their judges and accusers, and in more recent days, the Reformation movements, carried on under the mighty impulse of Luther, "that solitary monk that shook the world," and John Knox, who liberated his nation and his countrymen from the yoke of superstition, are striking instances of what the text affirms : "The people that know their God shall be strong and do exploits."

What is characteristic of the individual, is true of certain nations. The religious sentiment—call it so if you will—is found in certain countries more strongly developed than in others, and just in proportion have they left their mark upon the world, and made the present age their debtors. Where it is nothing better than fanaticism, or superstitious fear of the Divine Being, it leads to nothing worthy or noble—as for example in the crusades of the middle ages for the capture of Jerusalem,—but where it springs from an intelligent apprehension of man's relation to his God, and his readiness to help in every time of need, it inspires to marvellous deeds of daring, and to the sacrifice of life itself. This religious sentiment, or rather faith, was the mainspring of that long succession of struggles which has made Scotland bulk so largely in the history of the world ; that has raised her—poor, and small, and insignificant among the nations, to a rank equal with those of the foremost—not it may be in material wealth and greatness, but in all that consti-

tutes true moral grandeur. Her sons and daughters endured as seeing Him who is invisible. They bore up under repeated reverses that would have crushed feebler souls. Immured in dungeons, or banished into exile, or hemmed in by the wild waves of the ocean in rocky prisons, their voices rang out in notes of praise above the storm. The wintry winds, the rage of arctic storms, famine, solitude and chilly cells racked the frames and broke the health of many of Scotland's noblest sons, but never once shaked their resolution nor their trust in God. On the scaffold and at the stake they met their doom with calm resignation, "sustained by the bright visions of the martyr's crown." "Firm as the rock they rested their hopes on the foundations of eternal truth, and submitted to insults, wrongs, and privations, with a calmness and constancy of spirit which the malice of their enemies could not move." How were they enabled to endure in those times,

Whose echo rings through Scotland till this hour ?

There was with them, as with the Hebrew children in the furnace, one whose form was like unto the Son of God. He heard their prayers, lightened their burdens, sustained their sinking souls, and irradiated the gloom of the lonely prison with his own glorious presence.

There is a theory that nations are moulded by their physical surroundings, and that faith and courage are results in great measure of certain climatic conditions. The man who breathes the bracing mountain air, and inhabits the frigid regions of the Arctic zone is doubtless very different from the man of the plain or the torrid belt. The material world, upon him who has an eye for beauty, exercises a powerful and constant influence. Hence it is argued that the highest forms of civilization centre in rugged regions where men have to battle with difficulties, and not in rich fertile valleys, where the human race is stationary, because there is

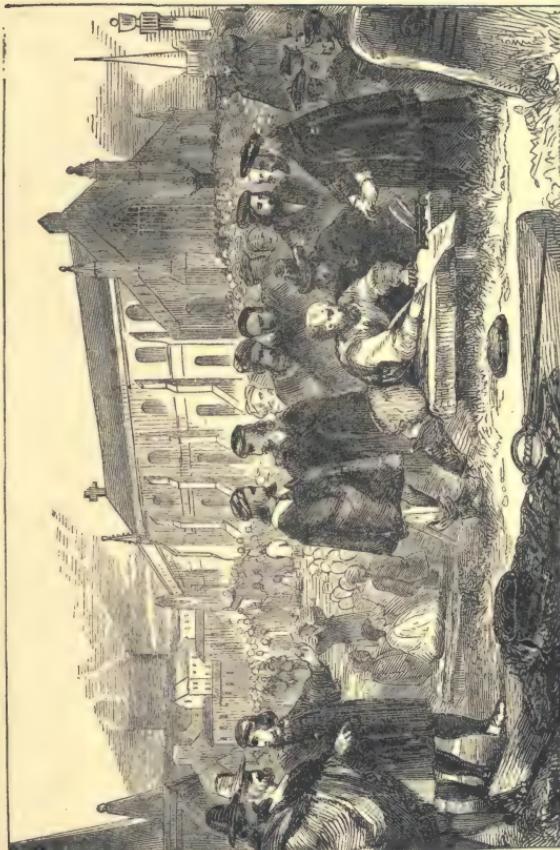
nothing to draw out the stronger elements of manhood. The severe and somewhat uncongenial religious life of Scotland has thus, it is said, sprung out of its physical conditions. "The soil is largely hard and unproductive, its sky is cloudy, its climate severe, its seas stormy. It is a land pierced with deep, shadowy glens—on whose mountain summits thick mists brood, or creep along their sides in weird and mysterious forms ; a land whose far stretching hills and deep ravines, have their silence broken only by the foot fall of the deer, or the rustle of the partridge's wings." Such features, it is said, could not fail to effect the religious life of the people, and impress upon them qualities of reverence, solemn pathos and strong endurance. To some extent this is true, but whatever the color of the nation's piety the thing itself is divine in its origin. The men of a by-gone age communed with God in solitude and gained inspiration for holy deeds of daring in the pavilion of the Most High. It was their religion that made them valiant and gave them that superiority of mind that scorned ease and opulence and chose the loss of all that was dear to man on earth rather than betray conscience and yield up the sacred birthright that belongs to every child of God !

What has singled out Scotland from other nations is the fact that the religious sentiment, coupled with a considerable degree of intelligence and rational conviction, has been found, not simply nor so much among her nobles and educated classes, as among the masses of the population. Whatever reforms have been accomplished in church or state, has been the result of united action on the part of the entire nation. A few who valued royal patronage and emoluments, more than constitutional liberty, and who cared little for any form of faith whatever, stood aloof from such struggles for national freedom, as at Bannockburn, and the contendings for purity of worship in martyr times. But with such trifling exceptions, all classes ranked under the same banner, and fought side by

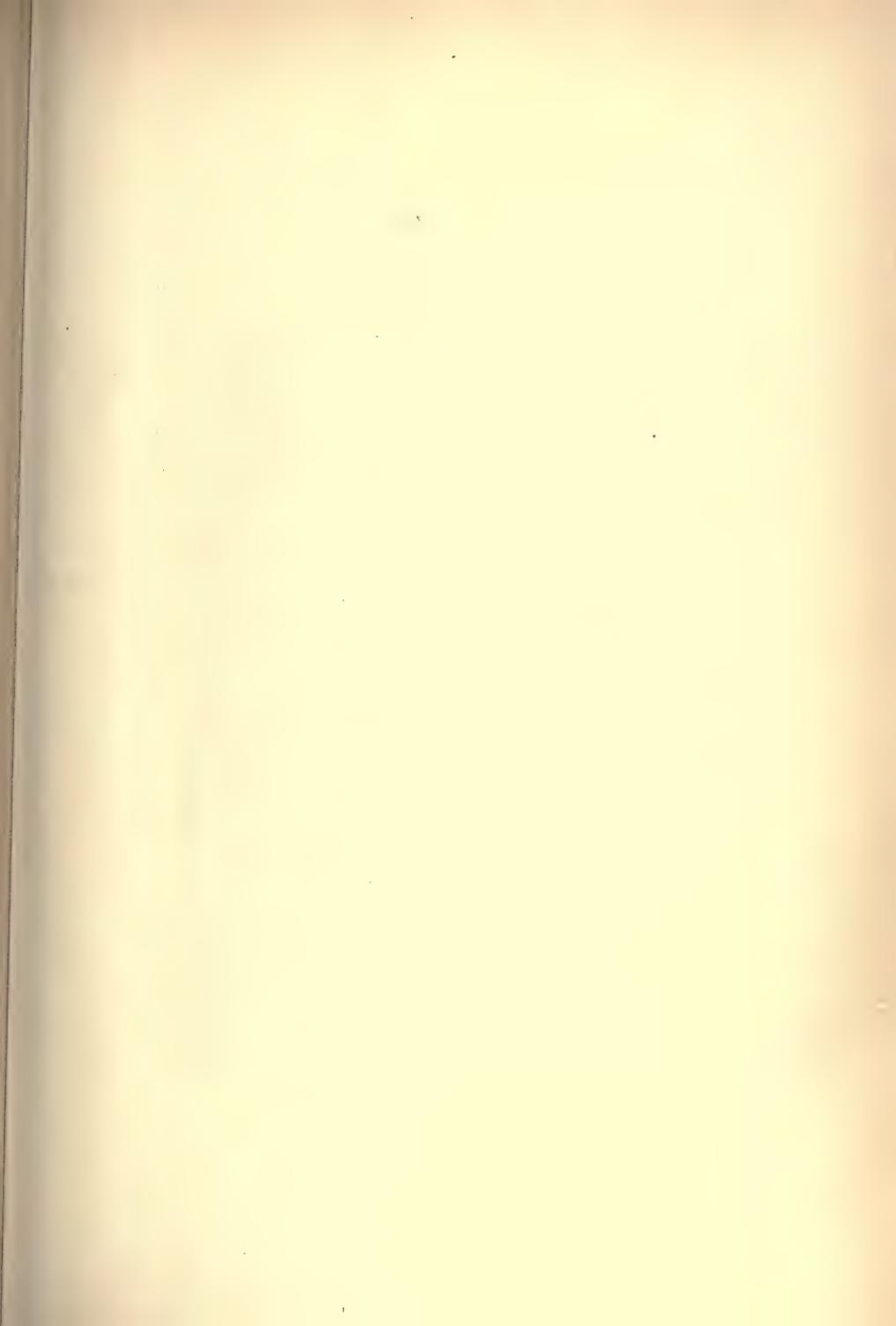
side. No one conversant with the signing of the "Solemn League and Covenant," or the details of those unequal and bloody engagements at Drumclog and Bothwell Bridge, can doubt for a moment the united demand of a long-suffering people for the redress of grievances. The very appearance of the Covenanters, when suddenly called to face the enemy, destitute of all the usual implements of war, and but ill prepared to resist the avalanche of trained battalions, shows who were the men and what were their occupations, that willingly surrendered life rather than their God-given liberties. The description given of their arms and ammunition in a burlesque poem of that age, however highly colored, contains not a little truth :

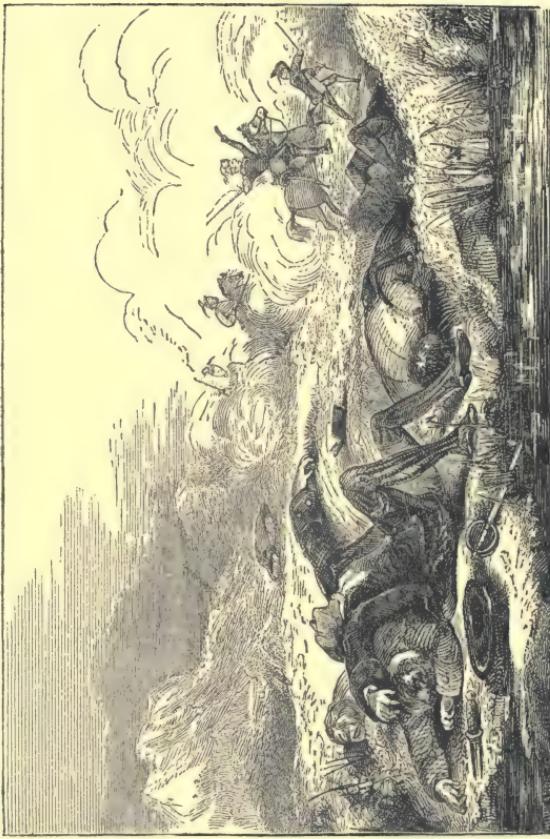
Some had halberts, some had dirks,
Some had crooked swords like Turks,
Some had slings, some had flails,
Knit with eel and oxen tails ;
Some had spears and some had pikes,
Some had spades that delved dykes,
Some had fiery peats for matches,
Some had guns with rusty ratches ;
Some had bows, but wanted arrows,
Some had pistols without marrows,
Some had the coulter of a plough.
Some scythes both men and horse to hough.

In order to prove that this strong religious sentiment animated all classes of the commonwealth, down to the humblest sons of toil, let me select at random one of the instances of the exploits done by the men "who knew their God," in the days of old. I have often thought, that could artistic genius be found capable of delineating in panoramic view the heroic deeds of that bloody age, it would far out-rival the brightest gems of mediæval art. What a glorious subject for the artist's pencil, the battle of Airsmoss, where Richard Cameron and a small body of brother Covenanters were surprised and murdered in cold blood. Cameron hunted like a



The signing of the solemn League and Covenant.





The Battle of Airmoss.

deer upon the mountains from place to place, has just—with thrilling eloquence—been exhorting his hearers to accept of Christ—the whole congregation weeping as if their faces had been washed with a shower of rain. It was his last sermon. As he passed across the moor in company with friends, the troopers overtook them. See that noble form, ere the battle has been joined, commanding his little company to the God of battles, and adding with peculiar fervor: “Lord spare the green and take the ripe. This is the day I have prayed for—the day I have longed for—the day I shall get the crown; come let us fight to the last.” Nobly but briefly did that little band resist; they fought like lions till they could fight no more, and soon the roar of battle was hushed upon the moor. “I die,” said he, “as a witness for Christ, and what a privilege it is! Weep not, but continue steadfast in the faith, and not fear suffering.” Two or three hard breaths, and he was at rest. They gathered the blooming heather and strewed it in his grave,—gently laid him down on the moor where he fell—strewed more heather blossoms over his loved form, and left him alone, and went their way, to do and suffer the like for Christ.

Upon the wild and lone Airsmoss, down sank the twilight grey,
In storm and cloud the evening closed upon that cheerless day.

Nature seemed a reluctant spectator of such cruelty, and concealed the beauty of a summer’s eve in premature darkness. But how different the scene in the spirit world!

When the righteous had fallen and the combat had ended,
A chariot of fire through the dark cloud descended;
The drivers were angels on horses of whiteness,
And his burning wheels turned upon axles of brightness.

A seraph unfolded its doors, bright and shining,
All dazzling like gold of the seventh refining,
And the souls that come forth out of great tribulation,
Have mounted the chariot and steeds of salvation.

On the arch of the rainbow the chariot is gliding,
Through the paths of thunder the horsemen are riding ;
Glide swiftly, bright spirits, the prize is before ye,
A crown never fading, a kingdom of glory.

Truthfully did his murderers say, when delivering up the head and hands of the martyr to the officers of the council in Edinburgh : “ These are the head and hands of a man who lived praying and preaching, and died praying and fighting.”

Another scene—John Brown, the christian carrier of Priesthill, after morning worship, has left his humble cottage for his daily toil. He is found by Claverhouse and his ruffian soldiery, and brought back, walking before his murderers, more like a conqueror than a captive. Refusing to turn recreant to his Maker, and swear against his conscience, he is ordered to his knees to prepare to die. He kneels down and prays with such fervor and fluency, despite a stammering tongue, that the stout hearts of the dragoons were melted, and their eyes suffused with tears. Rising from his knees he says to his wife, who, with her babes, are spectators of this bloody tragedy. “ This is the day I spoke to you of when first I proposed marriage,” and asks if she is willing to part with him. “ Heartily willing,” said she. “ This is all I desire,” said the dying martyr, “ I have nothing more now to do but die.” Kissing her and his children, and praying that all purchased and promised blessings may be multiplied unto them, Claverhouse interrupts his speech, places the pistol close to the covenanter’s head, and shatters his skull ! Do you wonder that curses rest upon the man that could do so foul a deed, or that Scotland is proud of her sons and daughters who could act their part so well ?

Once more, and I drop the curtain : The scene is on the Galloway sea shore ; Margaret Wilson, the virgin martyr of eighteen years, and an aged and pious widow, are dragged forth to die. The victims are followed to the place of doom by crowds who can hardly believe that men in God’s image can venture on such a horrid deed.



Peden at the grave of Cameron.

The sentence is that they be tied to stakes fixed within the flood mark, where the river meets the sea, and there be drowned with the rising tide. The stakes are driven into the oozy sand—the widow's furthest in—that she may die the first. The tide begins to flow, the hoarse, rough billows come advancing on, swelling and mounting inch by inch, over limb and breast and neck and lip of the aged heroine, while the younger victim still in shallower water, gazes on the awful spectacle, knowing that in a few minutes more her agonies will be the same. Does she flinch? When for a moment the cords that bind her to the stake are cut, and she is offered life if she will recant and deny the faith, does she yield? No! She spurns the abjurations oath, and so, plunged again into the heaving waters, after a brief struggle, the spirit of the virgin martyr enters upon eternal joy. Well may we say, as we read such histories,—

There are no colors in the fairest sky so fair as these,
Methinks their very lines shine still and bright,
Apart—like glow-worms in the woods of spring—
Or lonely tapers shooting from a light.

That guides and cheers,
Or, seen like stars on high,
Satellites, turning in a lucid ring,
Around the Covenanter's heavenly memory.

But the valiant exploits of that age were by no means confined to men of humble rank. Among the titled nobles of the land there was found the same heroic defence of the ancient faith. On the 27th day of May, 1661, first in time and first in rank of Charles' victims, the Marquis of Argyle suffered death, as the Proto Martyr of covenanting times. History records no grander event than the bearing of Archibald, Earl of Argyle, when condemned and on the scaffold. Receiving his sentence kneeling, he rose and said, "I had the honor to set the crown upon the King's head, and now he hastens me to a better crown than his own." On the day of his exec-

cution, when his attendant clergyman put the question, "what cheer, my lord?" "Good cheer, sir," was the reply, "the Lord hath again confirmed and said to me from heaven, son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee." Then with steady step, calm pulse, and unmoved countenance, after earnest prayer he kneeled before the axe, gave the signal and the weapon fell. "I could die as a Roman, said Argyle, but choose rather to die as a christian," and as such he died. Twenty-four years afterwards, on June 30th, 1685, another Argyle died under the executioner's axe, saying as he went to join his martyred father: "I die not only a Protestant, but with a heart hatred of Popery, Prelacy, and all superstition whatever." These noblemen—noble not only by birth but by gracious endowments, have left behind them characters which their enemies have failed to depreciate or asperse. So long as the heath covered mountains of Scotland remain, the name of Argyle will be gratefully remembered. That name means liberty of conscience, freedom of speech, constitutional government, obedience to just rulers, and disinterested patriotism towards the land we live in, and the land of our birth.

I know that it may be said, that the valor and immortal acts of many of Scotland's sons were due more to simple patriotism than the religious element in their nature. In reply, I ask, can there be genuine love of country without reverence for God? Are not piety and patriotism kindred virtues? Do they not proceed alike from the same fountain of unselfish and God-like emotions? Have you ever known a man, truly loyal and devoted in the maintenance of the nation's honor, and the vindication of her liberties, who had no religious feelings? So far as we can understand the inner life of Scottish patriots, we recognize stern fidelity to truth, and jealous watchfulness of the rights of the greater King, as the motives to action. Not for the acquisition of territory did they draw the sword, but that what heaven had given them, in soil and sacred

heritage, might never in all time coming be outraged by the foot of the usurper.

The Presbyterian type of religion has often been, and still is caricatured by ignorance and envy, as something that degrades both God and man. In the press and from the platform, Calvinism—that form of doctrinal belief which the majority of our countrymen accept—is denounced and misrepresented by pygmies, whose souls cannot approach those mysterious truths that the great Reformer taught. It is customary at the present day for backboneless religionists to disparage all religious fervor as mere cant. "Bigotry intolerance, fanaticism and puritanic zeal," are the names applied to earnest endeavors to revive the purity and holy passions of by-gone days. Strange that Calvinistic doctrines, if so unreasonable and pernicious, should have made such heroes, and left their imprint upon a little kingdom that has given constitutional liberty to many parts of Europe!

No human system of theology is perfect, but for Calvinism we claim the highest standard of morality, for states as well as individuals—the most defiant and successful opposition to every form of violence and iniquity, and the development of the sweetest and tenderest characters the world has ever seen. Such illustrious natures as William the Silent, Luther, Knox, Melville, Cromwell, Milton, John Bunyan, Whitfield and Chalmers were not formed by a narrow and cruel creed. And such are the men that Calvinism has produced in every age. Its grand doctrines commanded obedience when conflict meant death or victory, oftentimes death in victory, and when its stern call to duty kindled the fires of martyrdom. Standing firm on the eternal rock of their faith, such men boasted the tumultuous seas of civil and religious persecution, and won for their posterity priceless blessings, which can never more be alienated. Their characters were the product of their faith, and their actions the result of direct personal communion with the unseen

world. The God of the Calvinistic system of religion is the noblest being of which the human mind can conceive. His glorious attributes are exalted, while man the creature bends a lowly knee "before Jchovah's awful throne." Holiness, justice and truth blend in beauteous harmony with goodness, mercy and love, for all are united in the work of redemption for fallen man. The divine sovereignty and ceaseless watchfulness and controlling decrees of infinite wisdom, and the fact that nothing is left to blind chance or mere contingencies, gives to him who accepts it confidence and solid footing amid the ever-changing current of human events. Life is thus made sublime, for its destiny is fixed, and God is ever present in all that concerns the creature. Systems of religion are known by their results, and tried by this, Calvinism need not fear comparison with any existing form of theological belief. Eminent men on both sides of the Atlantic, who have no great sympathy with Presbyterian doctrine, are the loudest in its praise. "There is no system," says Mr. Beecher, "which equals Calvinism in intensifying to the last degree ideals of moral excellence and purity of character. There never was a system since the world stood which puts upon a man such motives to holiness, or which builds batteries that sweep the whole ground of sin with such horrible artillery." Says Froude, the historian of England: "When all else has failed; when patriotism has covered its face and human courage has broken down, that form of belief called Calvinism, in one or other of its many forms, has borne ever an inflexible front to illusion and mendacity, and has preferred rather to be ground to powder like flint, than to bend before violence or melt under enervating temptation."

Not to glorify the sainted dead do we recall the past, but that their descendants may act the same manly part in this the land of their adoption. Young men were pre-eminently the standard bearers of the faith, in the days gone by. In every grave crisis they stood firm, and gave life away with a readiness that seemed strange

in souls so young. Patrick Hamilton, a mere youth, led the way to martyrdom ; Hugh McKail, and "the boy Renwick," met death with steady nerve ; and of the three or four hundred ministers who in 1662 abandoned their livings for conscience sake, the great majority were between twenty and forty years of age. Every age has its special dangers, and needs the same piety and firmness that characterized the past. The martyr's crown may not be so common in our day, but to every one who manfully confesses Christ before men, there is in store the same reward.

The banner may fall but the spirit lives,
And liveth for evermore ;
And Scotland claims as her noblest names,
The covenant men of yore.

O for the brave, true hearts of old,
That bled when the banner perished ;
O for the faith that was strong in death—
The faith that our fathers cherished.

The piety of our forefathers was not a mere sentiment, but a rational conviction. They spake because they believed. With the Bible in one hand and the sword in the other, they alternately preached and fought. Often worsted in battles of fearful odds, their principles, instinct with divine life, were never crushed. Let us, following in their footsteps, and wisely wielding the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, imitate the courage of the aged covenanter, who thus apostrophizes the old sword, that had seen hard service at Airsmoss and Drumclog and Bothwell Bridge :

Thy blade is dimmed with dying martyrs' breath,
'T is tyrant blood that rusts thee, trusty blade.

Bright hast thou flashed, my faithful sword,
When battle raged, blaspheming foemen fell
Beneath thy sweep—the battles of the Lord,
The league, the covenant, thy legends tell.

And though thou art hacked and red with rust,
Yet from thy scabbard wouldest thou flash again,
As lightning would thou dash unto the dust,
The tyrant who would show to thee a chain.

Yes, our posterity will keep thee bright,
A symbol of the daring heart and hand
Which used thee well for liberty and right,
And built Fame's altar in our native land."



Religion the Source of
NATIONAL BLESSINGS.

“How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob ! and thy tabernacles, O Israel !”
—Numbers 24, v. 5.

“I remember the days of old, which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.”
—Psalm 143, v. 5.

“We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generations to come the praises of the Lord, and the wonderful works that he hath done.”
—Psa'm 78, v. 3, 4.

Religion the Source of National Blessings.

HERE is nothing at the present day regarding which greater difference of opinion prevails than as to what constitutes national greatness. In former periods considerable unanimity of sentiment prevailed, and the statement accepted: "Righteousness exalteth a nation." But in modern times this principle is practically denied. The actions of many public men would lead us to the conclusion that national greatness consists, not so much in a reputation for integrity and honorable dealing, as in transcendent pomp and splendor, extensive territories and vast political power. In opposition to such a theory, history, both sacred and profane, presents manifold instances of kingdoms sunk in moral degradation, while at the same time possessing all that the loftiest ambition could desire, or that riches could procure. On the other hand, comparative poverty and obscurity have often been found associated with genuine worth and moral grandeur.

In illustrating this truth, there is no instance more to our purpose than the eulogy pronounced upon the Israelites when encamped on the borders of Canaan. No finer subject for the artist's pencil can be found than that of the Hebrew army as it lay out-

stretched on the plains of Moab. Hitherto sustained by Almighty power, God's chosen people had vanquished all their enemies, and the fame of their victorious battles had spread itself on every hand. Heathen monarchs were alarmed and troubled on their thrones. The King of Moab, whose territory they had now entered, fearing lest he too should be vanquished, sends a deputation to the false prophet Balaam, with the reward of divination in their hands, begging him to come to his aid and devote the army to destruction. "Come now therefore I pray thee ; curse me this people, for they are too mighty for me ; for I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed."

Had Balaam been a righteous man he would at once have spurned the offer, but the bribe was attractive to his covetous soul. Accordingly he delays the messengers, and consults the Lord as to the path of duty. God prohibits him from going on such a wicked errand, saying :—"Thou shalt not go with them ; thou shalt not curse the people, for they are blessed." A second application follows, more urgent and more tempting, but Balaam replies :—"If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God." Still there is an evident desire on the part of Balaam to accompany the King's messengers, if the permission of Jehovah can be secured. Finally, we read that God allows the false prophet to go, but not to curse. Balaam's desire was to earn the proffered reward, but this was only obtainable by his obeying the King's mandate. As he proceeds the angel of the Lord blocks up his way. The dumb animal on which he rode rebukes him, and the angel, with drawn sword in hand, confronts the wicked prophet on his entrance of the Moabitish territory. The King meets him with becoming dignity. Sacrifices are offered, and the prophet retires to consult the Lord. Returning to the King, he says : "How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed ? or how shall I defy, whom the Lord hath not defied ? For

from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him : Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations. Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the fourth part of Israel?"

Foiled in this effort, Balak takes the prophet to a higher point of vision, where he may see the extended hosts of Israel. Again sacrifices are offered, again the Lord is consulted, and again Balaam refuses to curse the people. As a last resource, Balak leads the prophet to the top of Peor, in the hope that if he will not curse the people, he may at least remain neutral : "Neither cursing them at all, nor blessing them at all." The altars are accordingly once more erected, and the rams and bullocks sacrificed. There, upon the height, overlooking the camp of Israel, stands the false prophet and the King of Moab. The army of Israel, extended on the plains beneath for many miles, meets the prophet's eye :—"their tents spread out as gardens by the riverside—as the trees of lign-aloes—as cedar trees beside the waters, which the Lord hath planted." In the midst stands the tabernacle, with the pillar of fire and cloud overhead, a covering from the sun and a defence from the enemy. Struck with the beauty and moral grandeur of the scene, Balaam gives utterance to the words of our text ; " How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob ! and thy tabernacles, O Israel !

Why was it that the prophet rendered such a tribute of praise and spoke in such commendatory terms of Israel ?

(a). Not because of their military strength and prowess in war. The many signal victories they had achieved were due not to their personal bravery, but to God. Never was there a more undisciplined army than that which Moses led forth out of Egypt. Not by strategy nor sheer force of will had they been brought so far upon their march, and even at this period, with all their experience of nearly forty years, they could not have overcome the Moabites unless aided and directed by a higher power. The King of Moab

recognized the presence of a mightier foe than the Israelites ; he trembled not for Jacob's seed, but for Jacob's God !

(b). Not because of their riches and worldly possessions. Witness the condition of the people in Egyptian bondage, and the borrowing of their neighbors' jewels on the eve of their departure ! They were the poorest of the poor—worse in many respects than the Crusaders when they started on their march to Palestine. Their temporal comforts were few. They were daily dependent upon the bounty of heaven. Tent life upon the battle-field, exposed to danger, and far from enviable was their condition. To the eye of sense there was nothing attractive in this singular, yet invincible host.

(c). Not because of their national prestige. As yet they could hardly be called a nation, in the ordinary acceptation of the term. They had no reputation as such by heathen kingdoms. Their prospective territory was as yet in possession of other people. Their settlement in the land of Canaan was in the future, and only to be attained by aggression, and the continuance of hostilities. They had no King—no Cabinet—no Government to treat with other nations, and enter into alliances for the enforcement of laws, and the maintenance of rights. They had no place in history, and to the eye of sense seemed but a wandering superstitious horde, doomed to extinction sooner or later, when confronted by mightier or more skilful foes !

Why then did Balaam so much admire the spectacle spread out before him ?

Because he saw that God was with them. He traced all their blessings, temporal and spiritual, to the existence of true religion in their midst. The tabernacle was the place where Jehovah's presence was manifested, and the standing symbol of his protection. Although Baalam had never savingly experienced the saving power of grace upon his own heart, he acknowledged the value of religion in the camp of Israel. The tent and the tabernacle were the repre-

sentatives of family piety and public ordinances, and the results were national religion and national prosperity. They were pre-eminently blessed, not because of their superiority to other kingdoms in valor, or genius, or political diplomacy, but because they worshipped the true God, and acknowledged His claims to their homage.

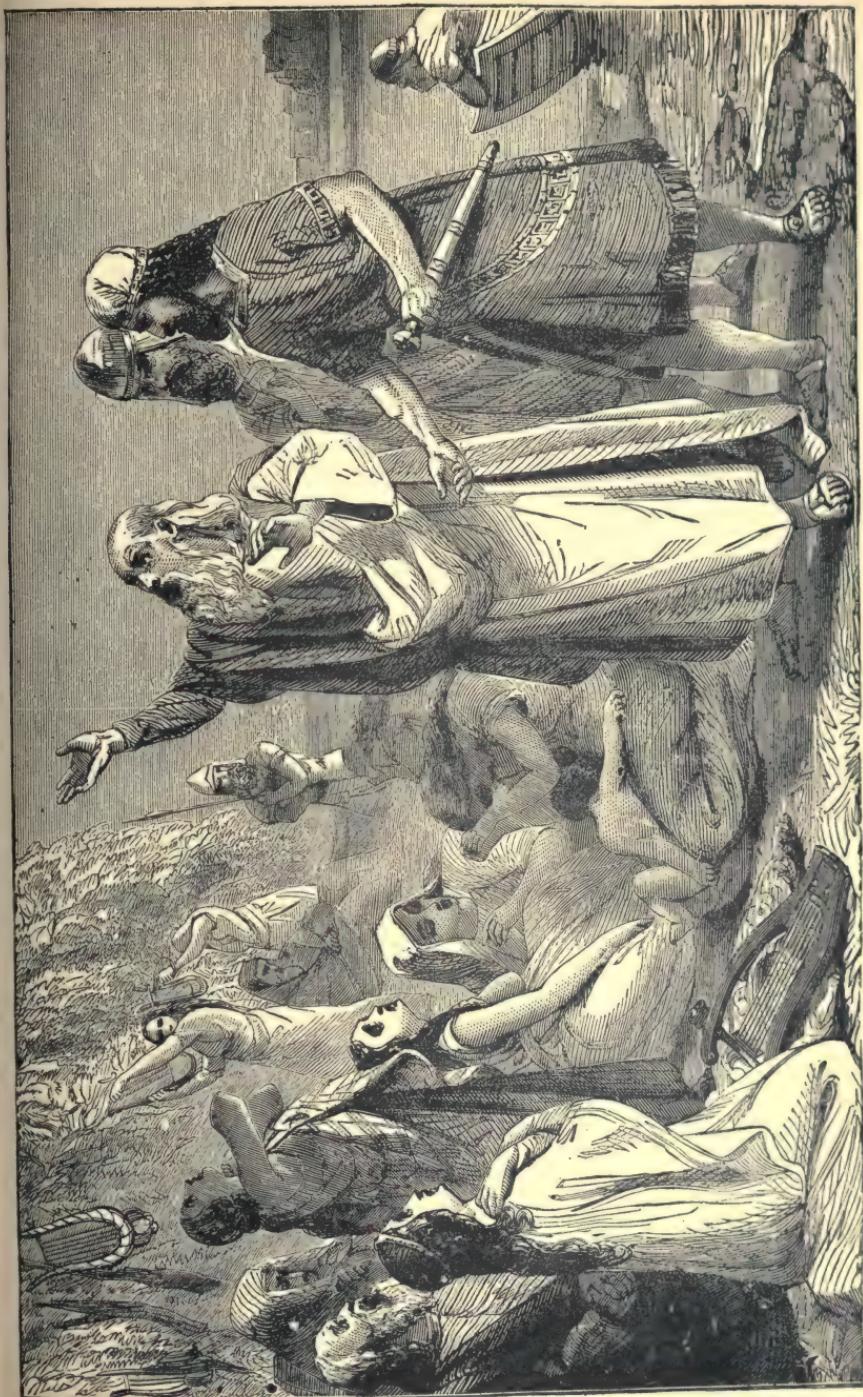
This leads me to speak briefly of the means used to foster attachment for the ordinances of the tabernacle and temple, in the descendants of Abraham. Says the Psalmist: "The days of old which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us, we will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generations to come the praises of the Lord, and the wonderful works that he hath done."

In days when books and printing presses were unknown, history was handed down from sire to son. But for such traditional lore, the stirring events and memorable deeds which have rendered nations imperishable, and their actions immortal, would have been lost to view.

The Jewish nation perpetuated its history, and inspired that fervent patriotism which still possesses the race, by handing down from generation to generation the story of God's mighty acts. It was a direct command of Jehovah that their children should be early indoctrinated in Bible truth, and made to understand the way by which their fathers had been led: "These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." "Take heed to thyself, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, but teach them thy sons, and thy son's sons." The meaning of every new event and institution in the history of Israel, was to be explained and impressed upon the minds of the young. Thus in regard to

the Passover : "When thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? Thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt, from the house of bondage." And after their entrance into Canaan, when they asked the meaning of the stones placed in the Jordan, they were to tell them that these stones were for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever, of the drying up of the Jordan, when the ark of the covenant and the people passed over on dry ground. It is in reference to these teachings of childhood that the Psalmist David says: "We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old. How thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them ; how thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out. For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them ; but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them."

The result of such careful home instruction was just what might be expected. Their love of country was intense, and their devotion to its interests supreme. When near Mount Zion, and within sight of the Holy city, their joy was unbounded ; when separated by exile their sorrow was too deep for expression, and bordered on despair. How fondly they loved their land, and mourned over their own back-slidings and the desolation of the sanctuary, as touchingly expressed in the 137th Psalm. The temple was in ruins, and the once busy streets of Jerusalem now deserted. The land was waste and inhabited by foreigners, while far from home, strangers and exiles, they sat by the rivers of Babylon. In such circumstances, what could they do but weep in silence as they remembered Zion. "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song ; and they that wasted us re-



“By the rivers of Babylon—We hanged our harps on the willows.”



quired of us mirth, saying, sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!"

To keep alive and quicken this undying love of country and transmit it to those who are to follow us, is one of the objects for which this and kindred national societies have been instituted. Next to the Jewish nation, Scotland has just such a charm in the eyes of foreigners, while to her loyal and leal-hearted sons her temples and her simple faith are enshrined in the heart of hearts. For has not the church in Scotland been the primary source of all the nation's greatness, whether we look at her in an ecclesiastical, educational or political point of view?

Like the Jew, we are not ashamed to avow our patriotism. We hold it to be quite compatible with a faithful discharge of citizenship in our adopted land, that we reverence our native soil. To-night, our tenderest memories cluster around the scenes of boyhood and the simple delights of early years. In bolder outlines than ever artist's skill transferred to canvass, we seem once more to gaze upon her bosky glens, her moorland ridges, her rushing torrents, her miles of purple heather, her snow-capped and mist-veiled mountains, her hills and valleys that once echoed to the cry of freedom, and sheltered martyrs from the fiery blast of persecution. We think of past and parted friendships, of the humble cottage nestling among the trees, of the parish school and kirk where first intelligence was awakened and reason stimulated, and finally of the "auld kirk yard," where fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, now quietly sleep under God's watching eye, awaiting the resurrection of the just.

Dear to our spirit, Scotland, hast thou been,
Since infant years, in all thy glens of green,
Land of our birth, and of our father's grave,
The eagle's home and eyrie of the brave!

Unrivalled land of science and of arts ;
Land of fair faces and of faithful hearts ;
Land where religion paves her heavenward road,
Land of the temples of the living God !
Yet dear to feeling, Scotland, as thou art—
Should'st thou that glorious temple e'er desert ;
We would disclaim thee—seek the distant shore
Of some fair isle—and then return no more ! ”

But not these things alone, to-night, demand our reverence. We pay homage to the past, because of the privileges it has conferred upon us in the present. If civilization and learning have now attained a point in advance of any former age, let us never forget the men, nor despise their labors, who gave a stimulus to thought and laid the foundation of moral work and social happiness in days long gone by. Those civil and political principles and institutions which are now the glory of christian lands, were wrought out and built up, in days when the few had to fight the many—when men looked to the invisible more than the tangible, and when honest, outspoken sentiments were rewarded by fetters, imprisonment and death. To the wisdom of her statesmen—the heroism of her Covenanters—the valor of her soldier citizens—the industry of her peasantry—in a word, to that unquenchable faith of God's sovereignty, which possessed the inmost heart of the Scottish nation, do we owe our noblest gifts in the nineteenth century—our peaceful homes, our law abiding communities—our undisturbed sanctuaries, and our constitutional liberties. As the great Edward Irving, apostrophizing his countrymen, well and truly says : “ Ye were a nation of families, and every head of a family was a king and a priest in his house, which was a house of God and a gate of heaven. Yon peasantry were as the sons of kings, in their gravity and wisdom. They were men who held communion with the King of heaven. Oh, never again till our King comes, shall the world witness such a chosen seed and noble vine, as were planted in the desolate wilds of the north.”

Do I need to apologize for such feelings? The man who has no peculiar love for his native soil is a monstrosity. There is some sad defect in his organization. Every Briton, be he Englishman, Irishman or Scotchman, glories in his birthright. A finer illustration of this undying love of country has never been repeated than the following: In the cathedral of Limerick there hangs a chime of bells which were cast in Italy by an enthusiast in his trade, who fixed his home near the monastery where they were first hung, that he might enjoy their sweet, solemn music. In a political revolution the bells were taken away to some distant land, and the maker himself became a refugee and exile. He lost his all, and after the passing of the storm found himself preserved alone amid the wreck of fortune, friends, family and home. The convent in which the bells were hung was razed to the earth, and the bells carried away to another land. The unfortunate Italian, haunted by his memories and deserted by his hopes, became a wanderer over Europe. His hair grew grey and his heart withered. In this desolation of spirit, he formed the resolution of seeking the place to which the treasures of his memory had been finally borne. His wanderings brought him, after many years, to Ireland. Proceeding up the Shannon, the vessel anchored in the port of Limerick, and he hired a small boat for the purpose of landing. The city was now before him, and he beheld St. Mary's steeple lifting its turreted head above the smoke and mist of the old town. It was an evening so calm and beautiful as to remind him of his own native land in the sweetest time of the year, the death of spring. The broad stream appeared like one smooth mirror, and the little vessel glided through it with almost a noiseless expedition. On a sudden, amid the general stillness, the evening chimes pealed forth from the cathedral towers. His experienced ear caught the sweet sounds, and he knew that his lost treasures were found. His early home, his friends, his beloved native land, all the best associations of his life were in those

sounds. He laid himself back in the boat, crossed his arms upon his breast, and listened to the music. The boat reached the wharf, but still the poor Italian lay there silent and motionless. They spoke to him, but he did not answer. They went to him, but his spirit had fled. The tide of memories that came vibrating through his heart at that well-known chime, had snapped its life-strings. Far from his sunny Italy the Italian died and was buried, but his last thoughts were of his home. Is not the feeling natural? As the exiled Scot, dying far from friends and country, says :

And oh ! to sleep where my kindred sleep,
In the green auld kirkyard's hallowed ground,
Where Sabbath bells and Sabbath psalms
In holy numbers float around.

My rest, methinks, would be mair sweet,
Gin the footfa' o' a frien' was near—
If loving hands would deck my grave,
An' worth bedew it with a tear.

But strangers' earth maun be my bed,
An' strangers' sod maun be my pillow ;
An' strangers' hands maun bear the load,
An' lay me 'neath the pale green willow.
Then farewell, friends ; but why repine,
Because frae thee and hame I'm riven,
What boots it where we part on earth,
When hopes are high to meet in heaven.

Down sank the sun. His golden rays
Lingered a space—then all was night ;
As his last beamlet passed away,
The soul of the emigrant winged its flight.

But it is not only meet that we should gratefully remember departed worth, and record their names and deeds in granite and marble columns ;—we owe it to them, when we pass away, that their memory shall be held as sacredly and appreciated as highly by our successors. “ Those things that our fathers have told us, we must not hide from our children, but show to the generation to

come the wonderful works that the Lord hath done." If we cannot go with them hand in hand, and stand by Bannockburn, Drumclog, Bothwell Bridge, Airsmoss, the Grassmarket and Greyfriars' church-yard, where mighty battles of the faith were fought—if not always won—we can picture to them such scenes, and as the Grecian patriot appealed to the shades of those who fell at Marathon and Salamis, inspire their hearts with the noblest emotions, and rouse their enthusiasm to like deeds of daring. We can tell them what made and kept Scotland free from the tyranny of priestcraft and the perfidiousness of kings—how it was she was seldom vanquished and never conquered—how that in these days of storm and conflict there sprung up freedom of thought and action--the right to judge of rulers and overthrow tyranny—the principle that the many are not made for the few, but the government for the elevation of the many, and the good of society at large. We can tell them of her admirable system of education, her schools and universities for rich and poor alike ; where the shepherd's son sits side by side with the son of the peer, in the halls of science, letters and theology, and better still, of that religious training associated with Scottish homes and Scottish Sabbaths, whereby piety became ingrained in the heart of youth, and God-fearing men were prepared to become the pillars of the state. By such careful instruction, may we not hope to foster in our children a love for the grand old past, and a sincere desire to

Snatch from the ashes of their sires
The embers of their former fires.

There is need for such training of the youth of the present age. Our young men and women are thoroughly drilled in the Greek and Roman classics. They are far ahead of their fathers in the range of their studies. But these are so general and discursive as to ignore to a great extent the history of periods that were momentous in the results for good to the human race. The time afforded

in our schools for the study of the endless subjects that now form the curriculum, does not admit of more than the merest outline of national characteristics. And perhaps it is just as well that the principles which underlie great periods in our national history should be explained by men who have a love for what is manly and honorable in conduct, and not left to ignorant, conceited and prejudiced *literateurs*, who scoff at what is sacred, and eulogize what is infamous and vile. What is wanted is that fathers and mothers, after the example of Sir Walter Scott, though with greater love for historical facts, should tell their children and grandchildren of a hoary past never to be forgotten, and names that can never be mentioned but with reverence.

We remark, then, in view of what has been said, that

I. True religion is the source of national morality. It is not every form of religion that produces morality. France, Spain and Italy, and heathen nations like India and China, prove that all methods of social reform, apart from evangelical truth, are failures. To hope for lasting results from these alone, is like tying apples on the branches of a decaying trunk. They perish without producing fruit. Moral and social reforms are not to be expected from political combinations and party creeds, but from a living christianity made the basis of all civil enactments. No nation can prosper that ignores the christian virtues.

II. True religion is the source of all real freedom. We seem to think that because of our constitutional form of government we are the freest people in the world, and so do our neighbors across the line, under a different rule. It is not so. Free speech and civil liberty are the results of christianity. It matters little what is the outward form of government. Both monarchial and republican forms of rule have been as despotic and as opposed to real freedom as was the reign of Nero. Popular liberty under both may degen-

erate into licentiousness and revolution, and all the horrors of unmitigated serfdom. But on the other hand, wherever religion is recognized as a living power, civil liberty will be enjoyed to the fullest extent ;—intellect will expand—science will be prosecuted with vigor, and conscience be protected against persecution.

III. Religion is the source of national prosperity. Certain nations not professedly christian have prospered for a time. Some of the most wicked governments the world has ever seen—rotten to the very core—have been permitted to flourish, in order that their downfall may at last be the more apparent. In the very moment of the nation's pagan revelry, Babylon was destroyed. And so it has been with every nation that systematically ignores God's word. Taken all in all, the nation that practises virtue and honors christian principles, flourishes and grows strong in all those elements that enter into national greatness.

With the privileges we enjoy, as great as those of Israel, why may not our land become another theocracy—God-governed, God-protected—a people happy, because holy, surpassing the palmiest days of old.

Goodly were thy tents, O Israel,
Spread along the river side ;
Bright thy star which rose prophetic,
Herald of dominion wide.

Fairer are the homes of freemen,
Scattered o'er our broad domain ;
Brighter is our shining day-star,
Ushering in a purer reign.





The Old Paths & the New.

“Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the good old paths ; where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.”

—Jeremiah 6, v. 16.

The Old Paths and the New.



THESE words, addressed by the prophet to the inhabitants of Judah, are applicable to ourselves and the age in which we live. It may seem foolish that the enlightened, progressive and highly eulogized present should take lessons from the conservative and ignorant past. And yet we may possibly find that modern changes in society and departures from old ways of thinking and living, are not all praiseworthy, and that whatever real improvement and advancement has been made is due to the labors, institutions and principles undergone, maintained and asserted, by our ancestors in days gone by. The remark of Emerson, "that while society has acquired new arts, it has lost its old instincts," is literally true of the present, as contrasted with the past.

We do not say that in everything the former days were better than these. We are not pessimists. We recognize with gratitude the onward march of civilization and culture that the nineteenth century boasts of, and the earnestness of a still better future for our land and for the world. We do not claim for our forefathers a monopoly of wisdom, or prudence, or virtue, or religion. They

were fallible, as we are. They had imperfections, and follies, and mistakes in judgment. We do not take them for our guides in solving many intricate questions that were not agitated in their day, and are the outcome of a different state of society than that in which their lot was cast. Nor need we slavishly follow them in manners and customs, which are but the accidents of existence. But believing that in the main they endeavored to conform their lives to the requisitions of a sound morality, and were thus prospered in their endeavors to found systems of civil and religious polity that continue to be the admiration of the world, it is surely the part of wisdom to study their character, the principles which directed them, and the paths in which they walked. If it is the duty of the individual to scan the lessons of the past, so it is of the nation. Young in years compared with the old world, and that empire from which many of us have sprung, it is well to know how in circumstances far more unpropitious than ours, and in spite of persecution and opposition, they acquired such a goodly heritage as they have bequeathed to their descendants. With us it is but the beginning of an empire, destined we fondly hope to occupy no mean place in the fulfilment of God's grand designs with humanity at large. Without being over sanguine, every true patriot can say:

I hear the tread of pioneers,
Of nations yet to be ;
The first low wash of waves, where soon
Shall roll a human sea.
The rudiments of empire here,
Are plastic yet and warm ;
The chaos of a mighty world,
Is rounding into form.

The phrase, "old paths," means methods of living, maxims approved, truths believed, and principles adopted. The language gives us a hint of the primitive modes of travel in Palestine, where there were, and still are but few roads, and where communication

between distant tribes was difficult and tedious. Then by an easy and natural transition, it is used for the habits, manners and dispositions of men, or the fixed methods of legislation and government either in church or state. We know from scripture what Israel was in the days when faithful to her law-giver, and observant of his testimonies, she enjoyed his favor and protection. We know, also, why God visited her with judgment and dimmed her glory. In the text, the prophet exhorts the Jews to cease from backsliding and divisive courses, that have been so pernicious and productive of evil. "Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." This evening, as appropriate to the occasion, we use the text as an exhortation to study the history of that land whence our fathers came, that we may copy those virtues and excellencies that made her so conspicuous and so honorable in the eyes of other nations.

Enquiring into the doctrines and practice of our fathers in days gone by, we find :

I. Unmistakable belief in a living God ; in an overruling providence ; in a revelation from the Almighty to the soul of every man, and in a coming day of judgment. Details as to creeds and confessions, which they at times perhaps unduly magnified, and held too obstinately, need not be referred to. But in regard to those great fundamental actions that are inseparable from any system of religion worthy of the name, they gave forth no uncertain sound.

II. Regarding the word of God as inspired and profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness, they made it a daily study in their homes and in their schools, and endeavored to regulate, not only their individual conduct, but the nation in its corporate capacity, by its demands. The conduct of rulers, as well as ruled, was judged by its standard of integrity and honor. What was wrong in the humblest was regarded as a greater

wrong in the highest citizen. Frauds perpetrated in high places were considered more dangerous to morals than breaches of the law in private life. With unsparing and impartial justice, king and cottager, prince and peasant, were arraigned before the bar of public opinion and the courts of law, regardless of consequences.

III. This stern administration of the higher law brought with it into family and social life a rigor and severity that cannot be understood, and is often most ignorantly and unreasonably vilified. The fact that the oldest members of the family were entitled to the respect and obedience of the younger, that their commands were to be peremptorily obeyed, that parents were the sole and supreme arbiters in cases of dispute, were matters universally recognized as right and proper, and never called in question. The prompt and impressive infliction of punishment for wrong-doing may at times have been excessive, and may have hindered the full flow of that mutual love which secures confidence and attracts the young to the old, but it was infinitely superior to that utter disregard of law and order which prevails in the great majority of Canadian homes. The Sabbath in such homes was literally a day of rest. The house of God was the meeting place for all ages. The Bible and the catechism, and the works of old Puritan and covenanting fathers, were the books read and pondered. These were the moulding and disciplining agencies of the last century, and the subjects of discourse in school and by cottage fireside. "The proud pre-eminence of every Scotchman was not only that he could read his Bible, but knew its meaning word for word equally with the most learned in the land. Alone of all the peasantry of Europe, the Scottish peasantry as a body could do this, and often by ingleside and wayside,

Reasoned high
Of Providence, foreknowledge, will and fate,
Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute.

Thus her religion and her schools gave her a people which for intellectual fire and sustained strength of purpose has have no equal,

and among which there were grand outstanding types of human nature, which continue to this day to exercise a most commanding influence upon the civilization of the world. The mental food was perhaps heavy, and often incomprehensible to tender years. But it produced strong men—thoughtful and critical in the highest degree. With all our improvements in models of Sabbath school teaching and the manifold helps afforded, the youth of the present day know far less of God's word and the saving truths of religion, than the children of a by-gone century, whose theology was gained from the lips of pious mothers by humble cottage firesides.

We are free to confess that in some cases the sweetness and sunshine which the Sabbath should bring with it were absent, and that trifling infringements and childlike encroachments on the sacredness of the day were magnified into mortal sins, and dealt with accordingly. But if our fathers erred on the side of strictness, have we not erred in a laxity of behaviour that threatens to blot out the Sabbath from the calendar of holy days? It is here as a nation that we are rapidly deviating from "the old paths," in which the fathers walked. The youth of the present know nothing of the stillness of that day of days, and the blessed effects it left behind upon all classes of the population. Poetry and prose have striven in vain to picture the impressiveness of the Scottish Sabbath morning, when the holy murmur of retired prayer mingled with the chant of the cotterman's psalm, and when old men and maidens spent the twilight of the day with the Bible in their hands and solemn thoughts of unseen things within their hearts, and when God's children met in the solitude of the forest to enter anew into covenant with their King, and feast upon the bread of life.

Lulled the sea this Sabbath morning,
Calm the golden-crested glens;
And the white clouds upward passing
Leave unveiled the Azure Bens—
Altars pure to lift to heaven,
Human hearts' unheard amens.

Says old Alexander Waugh, " Such prayers—such sermons ; none such to be heard now-a-days. It was a scene on which God's eye might love to look. What are your cathedrals, your choirs, your organs ? God laid the foundations of our temple on the pillars of the earth ; our floor was nature's verdant carpet ; our canopy was the vaulted sky, the heaven in which the Creator dwells. Nature in all the luxuriance of loveliness ;—and lovelier still, and infinitely dearer to God, multitudes of redeemed souls, and hearts purified by faith, singing his praise in grave sweet melodies."

IV. In the common relations of life they valued men for what they were, and not for what they had. Mind and morals were esteemed of vastly greater importance than wealth associated with wickedness. The standard of true nobility was that of the poet, when he says :

Worth makes the man, the want of it the fellow.

A man's immoralities were not shielded or excused by his social standing, accidental or acquired. No bribe could change the verdict of the populace or the bar. Forgiveness there might be, but condemnation none the less. Crimes which to-day are palliated and passed over, if not indeed regarded as virtues, were branded with the heated indignation of public opinion. The swindler who by sharp practice robs the widow and orphan, and embezzles the funds of public institutions, but nevertheless walks proudly at liberty, while the petty thief is sent to the penitentiary, would have fared differently in these by-gone days. It was not the clothing of the outward man that gave a passport to homes of refinement, but the character that he bore for purity of thought, chastity of conversation, and sincerity of deed. The christian sentiment of the age regarded the great brotherhood of humanity as strongest of all ties, and blended antagonistic and diverse elements into one. And so it should ever be.

The riches of the commonwealth
Are free, strong minds, and hearts of health ;
And more to her than gold or grain,
The cunning hand and cultured brain.

In the parish schools the rich man's son and the poor man's son sat side by side, and independent of the accident of birth, were treated alike. Position did not excuse stupidity, nor did poverty prevent the attainment of highest honors. Those whom the world venerates to-day and holds in high esteem, owe the grandeur of their lives to the tremendous difficulties which they encountered and overcame. The hard rocks which they quarried are engraven with their names, which are now immortal.

Finally, into the broader fields of national affairs they carried those principles that influenced them as individuals. Politics, as now understood and made merchandise of, they despised. They argued that what was good for the unit, was good for the mass ; that an intelligent people were the source of all lawful authority, and had a right to decide what the national faith and life should be. Herein lies the grand difference between the Puritans of England and the Covenanters of Scotland. The Puritan claimed individual liberty, but the Covenanter was not satisfied until he secured the same privileges for his country. The Puritan exiles crossed the sea to enjoy liberty of conscience and freedom of worship without the oppressive enactments of human law ; but the Covenanters stood firm on their native soil, and fought and gained against overwhelming numbers the battle of the faith. The idea that the word of God should have no recognition in the legislative halls of the nation is a modern and monstrous theory. Our fathers believed that in elevating men to civic honors, regard should be had to morals and christian principle more than to party and politics. In our day we place partyism and political creed above character ; in those days both were taken into account, and no man deemed

worthy of responsible office, whose private life did not stand the honest, candid, but charitable scrutiny of his fellow-men.

Thus far I have been speaking of what Scotland was a century ago, and subsequent to the Treaty of Union, which did much to raise her commercially, socially and politically in the scale of nations. I am not speaking of what she is now. In commerce, in wealth, in the increased comforts of the middle classes, in the more general diffusion of secular knowledge, and in many details of social life, she has made substantial progress. But in what constitutes the higher and nobler elements of national greatness, I hardly think she has improved, if indeed she has equalled the past. It is greatly to be feared that in later years Scotland has not maintained the faith and virtues of the fathers. In solid learning she has never excelled the scholarship of the past, though in superficial and ingenuous criticisms of long established and accepted beliefs she is at the present day singularly advanced. In piety and devotion she has sadly retrograded since the days of Samuel Rutherford, although in modes of worship she has made radical changes, and possibly some improvements. In morals (speaking of the impression made upon a casual visitor), she has sensibly declined, in spite of all the activity of the churches, and the countless agencies at work for the elevation of the masses. In her crowded cities, especially, there is little to encourage the hope that drunkenness, immorality and wretchedness are lessening, under the combined efforts of national education and awakened religious life. And yet, with all these drawbacks and blemishes, she will even now bear favorable comparison with the new world, and in some things be found worthy of imitation.

Our land is indeed a goodly land. No country on the face of the earth gives greater promise of a magnificent future. Its vast extent of territory ; its fertile soil ; its agricultural and mining resources ; its bracing atmosphere ; its constitutional government ;

its equal rights and privileges, and its so far peaceful Sabbaths, make it indeed the prospective home for millions of free, independent, prosperous, law-abiding subjects. The changes and marvellous progress of the past fifty years cannot indeed be unduly magnified. As, from some mount of vision, we look back and see how the Lord hath led us, and hopefully survey the future, have we not good reason to say :

What change ! Through pathless wilds no more
The fierce and naked savage roams :
Sweet praise along the cultured shore,
Breaks from ten thousand happy homes.

Laws, freedom, truth and faith in God,
Came with our fathers o'er the waves ;
And where their pilgrim feet have trod,
The God they trusted guards their graves.

And here thy name, O God of love,
Their children's children shall adore,
Till these eternal hills remove,
And spring adorns the earth no more.

But with our advancement in material and social comforts, there is I fear little attachment to fundamental truths, and less regard to the practice of every day virtues that constitute real and abiding national growth. Among the more prominent evils which every true patriot laments, let me mention,—

First,—The scepticism of the age. A large number laugh to scorn those "old paths" in which the fathers walked. They cannot see in them either solid happiness to the individual or stability to the nation. The spirit of the age is in revolt against the past. Discoveries in art and science, speculations in philosophy and theology, appliances and adaptations and conveniences to meet the demands of extended commerce and increased facilities for the exchange of thought and good-fellowship among the different peoples of the earth, generate the idea that we had better ignore the expe-

rience and gains of the past, and follow an entirely different line of conduct. Never was there a period when the spirit of unrest, distrust, doubt and disbelief was so prevalent, when men cared less for fixed laws of conduct in the business of every-day life and the administration of justice. What are called liberty of conscience, of thought and belief, are tending towards the complete renunciation of settled beliefs, which in olden times were entwined in the moral sense, and are essential to right living. Morality itself is in some quarters regarded as a matter of expediency, and religious restraint cast aside as beneath the notice of full grown men. In this whirlpool of uncertainty, many promising youths are not simply giving up old for new faiths, but are in danger of giving up all faith in the primary verities of existence here and hereafter. Nations also are renouncing old established beliefs and customs for novel and untried theories of government, which must inevitably tend to decay and disintegration. It is said that the Legislature of Connecticut, when they first got together before the Revolution, resolved that the colony should be governed by the laws of God in the Old Testament, until they had time to make better. I do not know that either as a colony of Great Britain, or a state of the Republic, it has ever yet made better ones. Nor can any nation improve upon the theocratic teachings of the Old Testament or the christian ethics of the new. The details of government and the customs of the Orient may change, but the ten commandments and the sermon on the Mount are of universal and continuous application.

Secondly,—I mention the race for riches. Another characteristic of our age, is the mad and feverish desire to accumulate wealth, regardless of the means employed. Half a century ago there were rich men and millionaires, as there are now, but as a rule, capital was gained by plodding perseverance, and not as at the present day by unrighteous speculation and dangerous ventures, that partake more of the nature of gambling than honest business transac-

tions. Young men are not satisfied with salaries far beyond what their fathers started with in life. They affect a style of living, and assume an air of importance, that is seldom justified by their means, and ultimately ends in bankruptcy or criminal disgrace. Nor is this tendency confined to young men. The young women of to-day are not guiltless in the matter. To gratify the extravagant whims of fashion, and the senseless demand for rank and social position, that has become a mania with certain women, homes once happy are ruined, and their peace and contentment destroyed.

Riches need not be despised, but they may be, and are, over-valued. Lives are wrecked to possess what after all confers but a nominal advantage. In what is an Astor, or a Gould, or a Vanderbilt, or a Rothschild, better than the honest workingman, who renders ten hours toil from day to day? Indeed the mechanic or average business man, who has just enough for his day's wants, ought to be far happier than the man who, with his immense estates and increasing wealth, passes sleepless nights in worriment about his investments, and in peril lest sudden revulsion in the money market may rob him of his means. He has no dread of robbers to waylay him by night, or snatch his body from the grave when dead. He has none of the vexatious annoyances of law suits, that drive some rich men mad. Contented with such things as he has and assured of the fulfilment of the promise, that the righteous shall not be forsaken, nor his seed begging bread, he seeks no more than his Father sees fit to give :

Toiling, rejoicing, sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes ;
Each morning sees some task begin,
Each evening sees it close ;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

When will men cease worshipping the golden calf, under the delusion that riches increase happiness? Happiness only increases

with a man's earnings up to a certain point, the point necessary to secure the comforts of life. All beyond this is superfluous, and productive of no good whatever. The richer the man the greater is the probability that his sons will live on billiards, and horse racing, and die in an inebriate asylum. With a moderate income and contentment of soul, a man may be happier than a prince. Without contentment he is miserable, even though his wealth equalled the rent roll of a Croesus.

Thirdly,—I mention prodigality and profligacy. As a result of the increased wealth of our day, these evils are alarmingly prevalent. I name them together, for they are almost invariably associated. Whether the miser or the spendthrift is the more useless to the commonwealth, is immaterial, but certainly at the present day, the latter class far exceeds the former. Riches seem to be sought after, not for the opportunities they afford of doing good, but simply for the gratification of the senses. Thousands are squandered in adorning the body and pampering the appetite that would go far to relieve the claimant necessities of the poor. Anyone who is acquainted with the paltry sums given by the rich men, and so called "fashionable churches" for the support of the gospel and benevolent purposes, in contrast with the amount expended upon amusements and pleasures (not always moral or elevating) cannot fail to mark the tendencies of the age. "Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof—whose god is their belly, and who mind earthly things," is as fitting a description of our age as of Greece and Rome in days of unbridled voluptuousness. Such a style of living is moral ruin to any land. The icebergs of Greenland are safer than the luxuriant foliage of a South American forest where death lurks; and the hard fare of a century ago was better than the pampered life of the present.

Fourthly,—I mention the arrogance of youth. The premature development of so-called “men” on the American continent is remarked by every foreigner. Long before they are out of their teens our youth are introduced to society, and fond mothers are anxiously looking round for “suitable settlements” for their children. Before our young men can construe a sentence grammatically, or can repeat the books of the Bible, or have read the history of their own land, far less that of the old world, they are candidates for political honors, and announce their opinions with an air and authority that is amusing to older men ; and long before their fathers thought of starting in business on their own account, they open up large establishments—succumb to financial depression—defraud their creditors—make over “their estates” to official assignees, and begin to live the lives of gentlemen of leisure ! Any one who knows anything of Canadian youth at the present day, will not deny that such is the prevailing type of embryo manhood. Far be it from me to make an indiscriminate onslaught on the really clever, pure-minded and aspiring minds of the country. The very extravagances and absurdities which are laughed at, may have in them promise of better things to come, while the sober and sensible and bashful young man, may become nothing more than a very common-place citizen. But as a rule, genius is not always the product of self-conceit.

The strongest minds
Are often those of whom the world
Hears least.

The real men of mark wait recognition and do not force their crude ideas upon the public. The Country Parson, in his essay on “Immaturity,” says : “A calf knows it is a calf. It may think itself bigger and wiser than an ox, but if it be a reasonable calf, modest and free from prejudice, it is well aware that the joints it will yield after its demise will be very different from those of the

stately and well consolidated ox, which ruminates in the pasture near it. But the human boy (we may change it to the Canadian boy) thinks he is a man, and even more than a man. He fancies that his mental stature is as big and solid as it will ever become, and that his mental productions are just what they ought always to be. If he be spared in the world, and if he be one of those whom years make wiser, he will look back with amazement, if not with shame, upon the crude productions of his youth." Were I addressing to-night a company of young men instead of older ones, I should say to them, in something of the same strain that an editor once preached a sermon to certain college graduates: "Remember that the world is older than you are by several years, and that for thousands of years it has been full of smarter young men than you, and that when the old world went whirling on, not one man in ten millions went to their funeral, nor even heard of their death. Be as smart as you can ; know as much as you can ; shed the light of your wisdom abroad in the world, but don't imagine a thing is so simply because you say it is, and don't be too sorry for your father, because he knows so much less than you. The world has great need of young men, but no greater need than young men have of it. Your clothes fit you better than your father's fit him, and cost more money ; and your whole appearance is more stylish ; but his homely scrambling signature on the business end of a cheque will draw more money out of the bank in five minutes than you could get out with a ream of paper and a copper-plate signature in six months. Do not be afraid that your merits will not be discovered. If worth finding you will be found. A diamond is not so easily found as a quartz pebble, but people search for it all the more intensely.

Fifthly and finally,—I mention selfishness. The spirit of selfishness, which takes no interest in the welfare of others, if personal ends are served, and class distinctions or what is familiarly known

as "caste," are as prevalent in the new world as in the old. The interests of the rich and the poor man have little in common. Capital and labor stand apart and frown at each other. Oppression and heartless dealing on the part of the one, and insubordination and insurrection on the part of the other are inaugurating a state of things that make thoughtful men tremble lest the infidel communism of the old world may become common in the new. In bygone days, Christian feeling and free intercourse between master and servants made them one. As Macaulay says:

The Romans were like brothers
In the brave days of old.

While we cannot at once remove the cause for such unseemly strife, let us work and pray for the good time coming, when on the part of large employers there shall be greater consideration shown for the feelings, the health, and the social and moral welfare of their servants ; and when workmen shall reasonably judge for themselves as to their rights and obligations, without the inflammatory harangues of demagogues, and shall co-operate with their masters in what is best for their mutual interests. "Give me," says a christian philanthropist, "workshops filled with christian men, and then confidence in the character of such workers will take the place of suspicion, and consideration of the master's difficulties will have a place in the workman's thoughts. Work purified from eye service will then be rendered for wages received, and quietly and gradually, but surely, sweetness, humanity and justice will come up into the important relationship between masters and men." In our churches we shall also see a better state of things. It is true that the rich and poor meet here together, but that is all. They keep apart. The richer members have no knowledge, and but little sympathy, with the claimant necessities of the poor, and the poor are afraid to touch the garments of the rich, lest they should be rudely repulsed. And yet these are "brethren in Christ!" They belong to

the communion and household of saints ; they are members of the same spiritual family, and have the same Father and elder brother ! What a mockery of religion ! How different from apostolic days, when the members of the early church had all things in common, and parted with their possessions as every man had need. “ Blessed is he that considereth the poor : the Lord will deliver him in trouble, and he shall be blessed upon the earth.”

Brethren of the Saint Andrew's Society, these growing evils in the body politic are not beyond cure. To you and all patriotic citizens is committed the task of rectifying what is wrong, extirpating what is bad, and propagating what is pure and virtuous, so that of all Britain's colonial possessions Canada may become the fairest and the best.

We cross the prairie as of old,
Our fathers crossed the sea,
To make the West, as they the East,
The homestead of the free !

Is it by individual effort that great reforms are effected and nations elevated. Let your lives be spent

In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,

and then when the battle is over, you shall pass away, if not amid the lamentations and wailings of the land you have loved, at least with the feeling that you have befriended your brother man, and made the world your debtor. And then, as was lately done to one of Scotia's sons, they shall put upon your coffin a St. Andrew's cross of lilies to speak of Scotland and charity ; a palm leaf, emblematic of victory ; a sheaf of wheat, to tell of a life fruitful and ripe, and a pillow of immortelles, to speak of rest and immortality.

May a life so beautiful, and an end so happy, be the lot of one and all !

Jewish Love for Jerusalem.

“Walk about Zion and go round about her ; tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces : that ye may tell it to the generation following.”

—Psalm 48, v. 12, 13.

Jewish Love for Jerusalem.



LARGE portion of the Psalms abound in praise of Mount Zion and the holy city. No subject was better fitted to call forth the sublime and inspired poetry of the writer. As the spot where the temple was built ; where God's presence was signally and gloriously manifested ; where the law was read ; where the Levites and congregation shouted songs of praise ; where the tribes assembled in their joyous gatherings from year to year ; where sacrifices were offered and peace and pardon proclaimed—Mount Zion, of all the places in the land of Palestine, was dear to every pious and patriotic Jew, and afforded a theme of undying interest to the poet laureate of the nation.

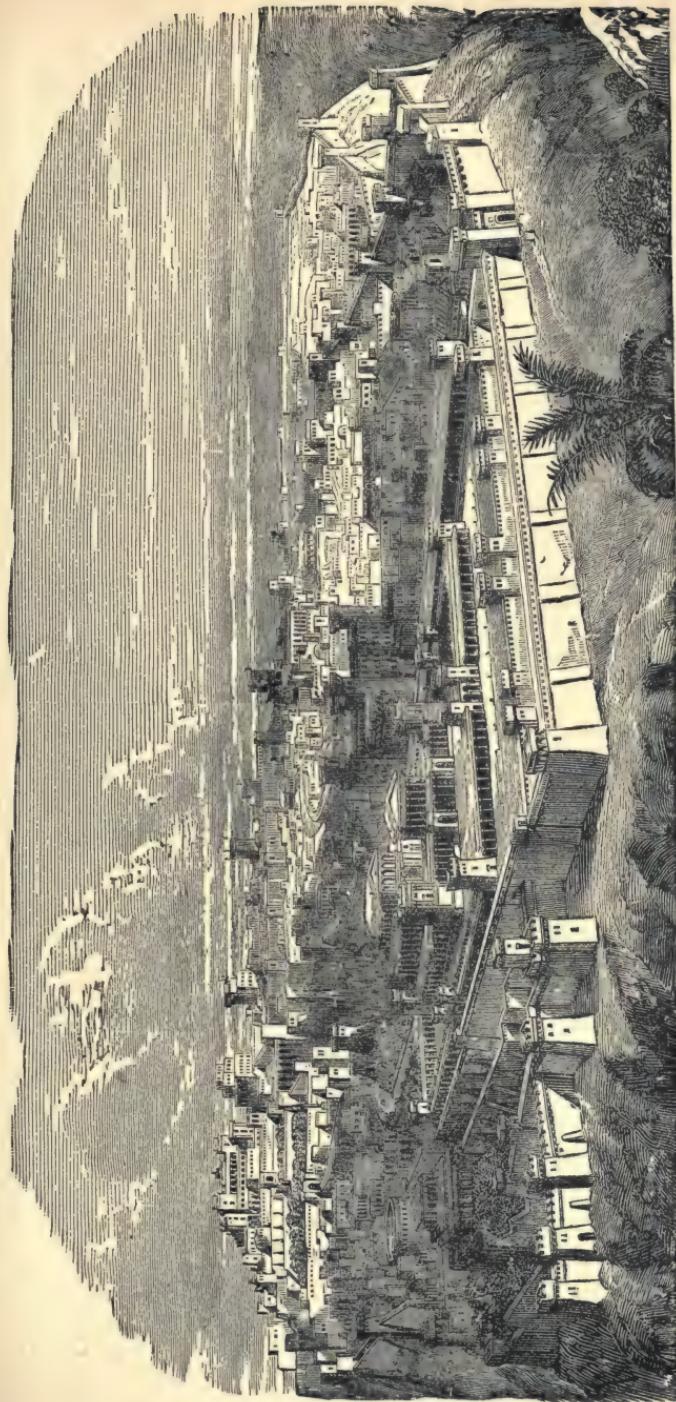
It was not mere sentiment that singled out the temple upon Mount Zion as a holy place, and made its dust precious to God's saints. Nor is this feeling of passionate love for Mount Zion extinct in the children of Abraham. Wherever you find a genuine Jew, whatever be his obscurity and outward condition, you find a lover of Jerusalem ; one whose heart thrills at the very mention of her name, and who delights to anticipate her restoration, when the

set time to favor her shall come, and the Lord shall build up her ruined walls and appear in glory.

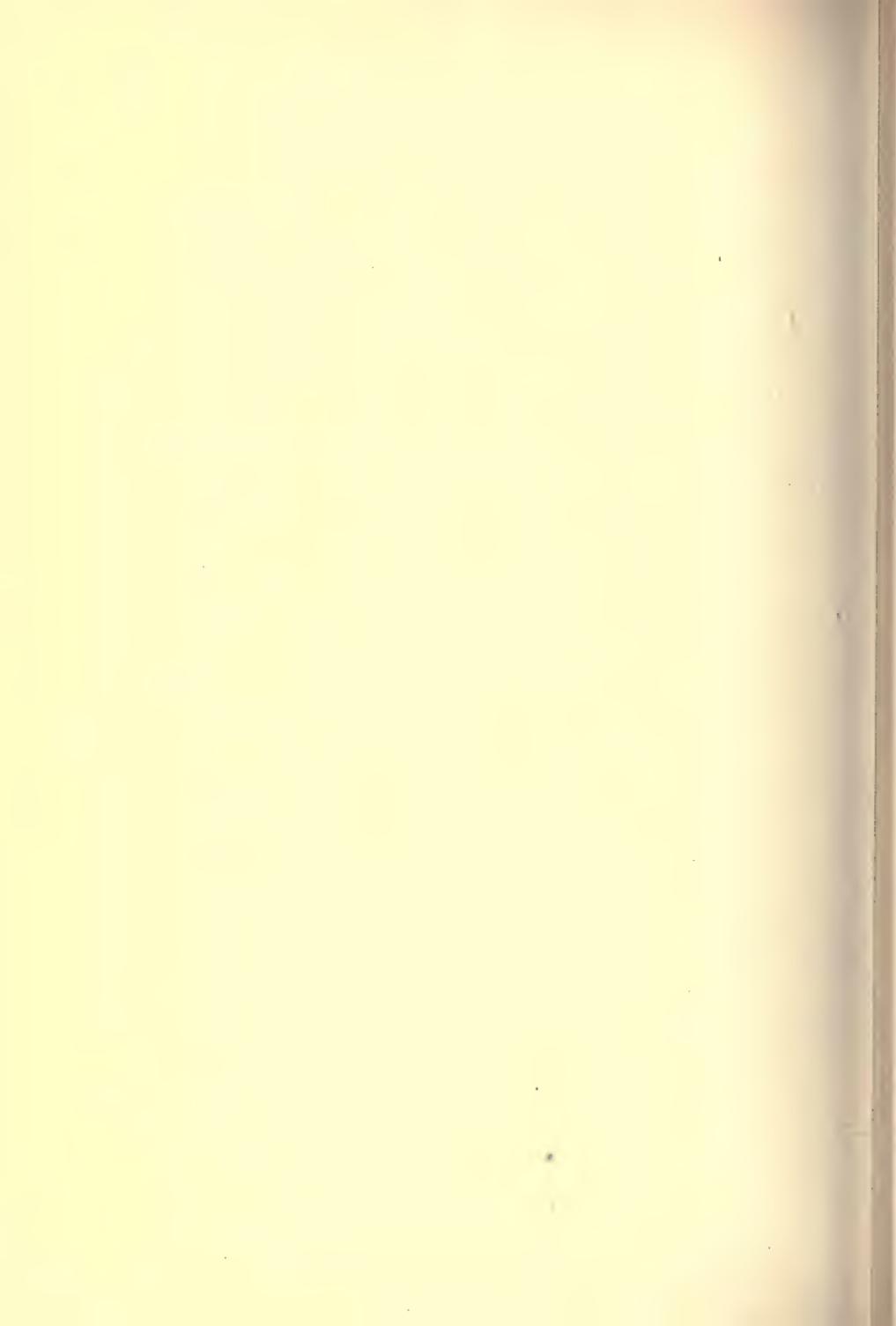
All places are not alike dear to the heart. There are lonely, dreary spots of earth, possessing no special beauty to the painter's eye, that are invested with a charm that is indescribable, but none the less real. There are homely, humble dwellings, unadorned and rude in structure, that surpass in our estimation the marble palaces of royalty. There perhaps our eyes first opened to the light of day, and we learned to lisp the name of mother, there we witnessed scenes of joy and sorrow that can never be effaced from memory, and there in silence and in sorrow we closed the eyes of the nearest and the dearest friends on earth. And is it not such feelings in a strangely intensified degree that makes Scotchmen and their descendants so tenacious of the past, that leads them on such occasions as the present to expatiate upon the weird beauties of their native land, to revisit in memory its hallowed spots and dwell with enthusiasm upon the lessons of the historic page.

Dear is the shed to which his soul conforms.
And dear the hill which lifts him to the storms.
And as the child, when soaring winds molest,
Clings close and closer to its mother's breast ;
So the loud torrent and the whirlwind's roar.
But bind him to his native mountains more.

We can thus easily understand how sweetly solemn were the associations of the Holy City and the Holy Land, and how the Jewish heart glowed with becoming pride as they repeated the well known lines "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the Great King." Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee, peace be within thy palaces, and prosperity within thy borders, or in the words of the text, in the version of Strenhold and Hopkins :



JERUSALEM—The Holy City.



Go walke about all Syon hill, yea round about her go,
And tell the towres that there upon are builded in a roe,
And marke you well her bulwarks all, behold her towres there,
That ye may tell thereof to them that after shall be here ;
For this God is our God, forever more is He,
Yea and unto the death also our gu'ir shall He be.

Mount Zion and the temple and her solemn ordinances were the glory of the nation, and the admiration of every Jew. The peace and prosperity of God's house, above all else, was dear to his heart. Their children were taught to esteem and reverence as sacred everything connected with the sanctuary. The temple occupied a lofty and commanding position. It was seen afar off, and was an object of terror and envy to surrounding nations. "The kings assembled saw it, and marvelled ; they were troubled and hasted away." From its summit the pious Jew looked around and gazed upon the land that God gave by promise to his fathers, in all its length and in all its breadth. In strength, in stateliness, in beauty of proportion, it was necessarily perfect, for it was heaven-designed. Its internal fittings were in keeping with its outward appearance. Its altar was overlaid with gold ; its doors were of olive and cedar, covered with cherubims, and its foundations of costly stones. Hiram, King of Tyre, sent goodly cedars from Lebanon, and three thousand Israelites hewed out costly stones from the mountain for the foundations of the house. No one was exempted from service, and no contribution was deemed insignificant. Towards the enriching and garnishing of the gorgeous edifice every Jew contributed of his means and labor. The whole congregation of Israel consecrated their service to the Lord, and gave willingly with a perfect heart.

But it was not the building, graceful and elegant though its architectural proportions were, nor the outward adornment of the altar, but the recognized presence of Almighty God in the hearts of the worshippers, that drew forth the affections of the nation. It

was this that made the sanctuary upon Mount Zion so grandly solemn and so awe-inspiring. When the glory of God filled the house ; when the spiritual fire came down from heaven ; when the high priest came forth from the Holy of Holies with pardon and reconciliation for guilty men, the gladness and joy were exceedingly great !

Next indeed to the Jew, has been the attachment of Scotchmen for their temples and their simple forms of worship. As Dr. John Kerr well says : “ Before the multitude will be drawn to mere ceremonies, the nature of the Scottish people must be made over again, their most hallowed associations destroyed, the most heroic pages of their history blotted out, and the last old stone dug up that lifts its head from the grey hillside to tell where martyred dust is sleeping.” The old, weatherbeaten, homely structures, with their moss grown ivy, but with no architectural beauty to attract the eye, and offering but little bodily comfort through the long hours of service, customary in other days, had in them a charm inexplicable, apart from the devotional feeling that possessed the worshippers. They felt the truth of the poet’s words :

Not the fair palaces,
To which the great resort ;
Are once to be compared with this
Where Jesus holds His court.

Nor was this a blind and bigoted attachment to forms and non-essentials. The church of the living God was regarded by them as the source of all national prosperity in the best sense of the term. It was not only a spiritual centre—a never failing source of hope and comfort to struggling humanity, and a teacher of saving truth to the masses, but it upheld good government, inculcated obedience to rulers, and insisted upon the practice of all those social virtues that characterise a happy and contented people. And is not this still the opinion of all right thinking men ? It is through the in-

fluence of the church that the fetters of the slave have been broken ; that despotism and tyranny have been ended in many parts of the world, that the chariot of war has been stayed in its career of desolation and civilization carried to its highest forms of development. Where churches are few or where they are corrupt :—where infidelity, rationalism and superstition prevail, there insurrection, bloodshed and licentiousness abound. The only civilization beneficial to the world, comes from the application of Bible truth to the heart of the commonwealth.

And although during the past century Scotland has undergone many denominational changes there is still the same unmistakable love for the ordinances of religion. It only needs adequate occasion to call forth the latent feelings of the nation on behalf of principles that have been handed down by bleeding sires, and show how deeply entrenched are the memories of the past. It is not to be expected, nor is it desirable, that there should be the same tenacious adherence to minor details in forms of worship that characterized the years immediately succeeding the Reformation and covenanting struggles ; nor that there should be the same uncompromising protest against certain ceremonies, which were then rightly regarded as symbolical of superstition and priestly domination. But in all that constitutes the essentials of religion, there is still, we feel assured, no lack of fervor and intelligent interest. Indeed, in some respects, Scottish piety, if less rigid and austere than in past days, is more attractive and aggressive. Never was there a time when evangelistic movements on behalf of home heathen were prosecuted with such zeal and success as at the present moment, and despite of the strongly marked and distinctive lines that still exist between the different religious sects, the spirit of brotherly charity prevails to an extent altogether unknown in years gone by, leading to harmonious and united effort in behalf of those grand social and moral reforms, which now press for speedy solution at the hands of

christian statesmen. Presbyterianism in Scotland, while indeed the most important factor in its religious life, does not now stand alone as it once did, the champion of free speech and free thought. Men of marked ability and noble spirit in the Congregational and Baptist bodies are allies and co-workers with the Presbyterian Church, in all the great movements that tend to the elevation of humanity, while the religious press (notably the "Christian Leader" of Glasgow), is adapting itself to meet the demands of an age characterized by feverish unrest and energy, but at the same time by lofty aim and purpose. Shall we, with jealous eye, regard the growing influence of other denominations, called it may be by other names, but one with us in spirit, and part of the great sacramental host of God's elect? Far from it. In this new religious quickening in Scotland we see the dawn of that better day, which martyrs longed for and saw with prophetic eye ; when Scotland shall realize in her own and other lands the fruit of her contendings, and await the coming of her King !

Early—early on our mountains,
Presage of a glorious day ;
Pure as from the native fountain,
Faintly broke the gospel ray.

Storm and cloud the pathway covers,
By our rude forefathers trod—
Yet that dawning brightness hovers,
Where St. Columb walked with God.

Now unto the hilltops get thee—
Where the sunshine we descry—
Nightly on the watch tower sit thee,
For his coming draweth nigh !

Greater changes than those mentioned may be at hand in both the political and ecclesiastical affairs of Scotland. These, however, we cannot regard with the same sad forebodings that seem to possess many minds. Around the past history and contendings of the

church of Scotland* tender memories cluster that can never be effaced. Even those who by successive secessions and disruptions have left her pale, cannot but remember her with a fond and filial affection. It is not for us, removed at such a distance from the scene of somewhat fierce and bitter contendings that at present convulse the mother land, to express opinions or proffer advice. Doubtless in the Canadian church, as in the churches of Scotland, different opinions prevail on the question of disestablishment and the probable issue of the present agitation. Some there are who conscientiously deprecate and strenuously oppose any speedy change in the position of the established Church of Scotland, not from personal or selfish motives, but because they regard her as not only the symbol of national piety, but the source of much of that widespread intelligence and robust manhood which have for ages characterized the Scottish peasantry. Others there are who in the present divided state of religious and theological opinion, compared with what it was a century ago, when the Church of Scotland was numerically and socially the church of the nation, demand disestablishment and the parity of all the different Presbyterian churches, and the discontinuance of State aid and recognition ; while a third party, and one which comprises many of the thoughtful leaders of public opinion, would prefer the comprehensive union of all the Presbyterian churches, brought about by mutual concessions and friendly arrangements on the part of all who have at heart the best interests of the nation, rather than by the violent demolition of existing claims. That such a union shall ultimately in some way be brought about we cannot doubt. The difficulties may be great, but they are not insurmountable. What has been accomplished in Canada and Australia can be done in Scotland. A united Presbyterian Church in Canada has done for the Dominion what never could have been attained by three separate Presbyterian bodies, holding in the main the sane doctrines and practising the same

discipline ; each eager to gain a foothold in every hamlet and the vantage ground over its rival. The Union in Canada has ended much unseemly and bitter rivalry ; it has raised the stipend of our more poorly paid ministers to at least a moderate living, and enabled us by uniting and husbanding our resources to do much more for the cause of Christ in distant fields. Let us hope that similarly wise counsels may soon prevail in that land we love so much, that dissension may soon end, brotherly intercourse be resumed, and a basis for united co-operation or incorporation be accepted. We cannot, in view of its past glorious history, fear the future of Presbyterianism in Scotland. The bush has often burned, but has never been consumed. “God is in the midst of her ; she shall not be moved ; God shall help her, and that right early.”

The questions which at present agitate the old world have long since been settled in Canada, where now all religions are upon an equality, and none may dare to coerce or oppress the other. But if the vexed problem of church and state is no longer with us a disturbing element, there are others which need careful handling on the part of all true patriots. It is different with us here from what it was in the land we left. There the great mass of the population are Protestant, here we have a mixed multitude of Bleu and Rouge ; Catholics of French and Irish extraction ; Orangemen, and Protestants of milder or fiercer type or creed, all living under the same flag and professing allegiance to the same authority. Our danger is not from monarchial despotism or foreign interference, but from intestine strife, from a war of races and creeds, fiercer and more terrible in its results than hostile invasion from another land. There are times in the history of nations when inconsiderate speech on the part of political incendiaries may excite the basest passions and arouse animosities that take years to quench. May we not be on the verge of just such a crisis? We have just by the strong arm of law stamped out one rebellion—woe be to the men or party that

recklessly incite another! At such a time there is needed the calm counsels of those who, guided by the teachings of the past, can act wisely in the present. To allay sectional differences, and restrain extremists from dangerous measures, and help to redress wrongs where such exist, is the mission of the true patriot. Scotchmen, whose ancestors paid such a price for liberty of conscience and freedom of speech, are peculiarly fitted to mediate between and moderate contending factions. If it be true, as has been said, "that where local affections are the strongest, there the hearts of the people are soundest, and there the arm of the patriot is ever ready to defend and preserve the unexampled privileges which the people enjoy," it should be ours to maintain inviolate the constitutional rights of the humblest citizen. In a land where no man dare interfere with our religious belief, and we no longer have to defend our liberties with broadaxe and claymore, let us carefully conserve to others the freedom we enjoy. While ever ready to repel aggression upon our cherished faith, saying in the language of the great reformer, John Knox, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther," let us none the less cultivate good will and friendship between man and man, and unite with all nationalities in making this Dominion of Canada second to none other under heaven. If Scotland is dear to us because of its martyred dead, so should this our adopted land. With a large sum our government purchased those wide-spreading prairies in the great North-West, but with costlier treasure, the blood of British and Canadian youth, it has been redeemed. This year dates the beginning of many a lifelong sorrow. Tears have fallen "like drops of molten lead,"

For first-born sons, who from their mother's side,
Went forth exultant in their country's pride,
And in the fierce assault, unfaltering, died.

Some one has said that "a land without memories is a land without liberty. The land that wears a laurel crown may be fair to

look upon, but twine a few sad cypress leaves around its brow, and it becomes lovely in its coronet of sorrow. Crowns of roses fade, crowns of thorns endure. Calvaries and crosses take deepest hold of humanity." All true perhaps, and yet we would rather have had the bloody page of history that marks the year unwritten, and been spared the memories of death upon the plains and death upon the scaffold. As it is, let us hope that the lessons taught us may not be forgotten, and that the battle cry may never be heard again. Better than monumental stones piled high over the fallen brave, whose life-blood stained the soil "they fought to save," will be the spread of those principles of righteousness and justice that alone make nations great. "Peace hath her victories, no less renowned than war," says Milton; he might have added, greater and grander far. He that fashions a ploughshare is greater than he who whets the sword; he who tills the soil, better than he who fertilizes it with human gore. "There's a grandeur in graves, there's a glory in gloom," says the poet. Why?

For out of the gloom future brightness is born,
And after the night looms the sunrise of morn;
And the graves of the dead, with the grass overgrown,
May yet form the footstool of Liberty's throne,
And each single wreck in the warpath of night,
Shall yet be a rock in the temple of Right.

In order that this good feeling should continue to exist in our land, between men of different political creeds and faiths, we ought as citizens, to cultivate good will between all classes and nationalities, in our several communities. There are small minded men in Canada as there have been at times in the neighboring Republic—men of no account in themselves, or whose opinions are of any value where they are known—who endeavor by flippant foolish writing in the columns of certain papers, to sow the seeds of dissension between brethren who have lived in peace for many years, and who use insulting language towards citizens who are among the most

liberal minded and enterprising of our merchants and manufacturers. Such irresponsible characters are beneath the notice of all respectable men, and merit, as they indeed receive, silent but profound contempt.

I have left but little time to enforce the claims of the St. Andrew's Society upon the sympathies of Scotchmen and their descendants. But is it necessary? The existence of such benevolent institutions have done much to smooth the rugged road of many a weary pilgrim, and help him to maintain that manly spirit of independence which once lost is hardly ever regained. Even in the land of plenty, the cry of honest poverty is not unfamiliar. It is not often heard in the public street, and does not appeal obtrusively for help from door to door, but all the more, it deserves the aid of all those who, in the spirit of the religion they profess, deliver the poor and the fatherless, make the widow's heart to sing for joy, deal their bread to the hungry and clothe the outcast poor. As Jennie Deans says in the "Heart of Midlothian": "It is na when we sleep soft and wake merrily ousrels that we think on other people's sufferings. Our hearts are waxed light within us then, and we are for righting our own wrongs and fighting our own battles. But when the hour o' trouble comes to the mind or to the body, and when the hour o' death comes to high and low, then it is na what we hae dune for ousrels, but what we hae dune for others, that we think on maist pleasantly." Sir Walter Scott very beautifully says: "The race of mankind would perish did they cease to help each other. From the time that the mother binds the child's head, till the moment that some kind assistant wipes the damp from the brow of the dying, we cannot exist without mutual aid; all, therefore, that need aid have right to ask it from their fellow-mortals. None who hold the power of granting help can refuse it without guilt." Beyond the narrow limits then of kindred, creed or race, cultivate that broad sympathy and compassion, which knows no nationality in the pre-

sence of distress. Love humanity with a broad, deep, unselfish affection. Seek according to opportunity to advance the welfare of every man with whom you come into contact. They are your brethren, whatever the complexion of their skin, or the dialect of their tongue. They are travelling with you along the great highway of life, to the same great goal—creatures of the same God and heirs through His grace of the same patrimony. In the great Catholic communion of saints “there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free ; but Christ is all and in all.” Of every true man it may be said :

Thy native home is whereso'er
Christ's spirit breathes a holier air ;
Where Christ like faith is keen to seek
What truth or conscience freely speak ;
What, Christ-like love delights to span,
The rents that sever man from man ;
Where round God's throne his just ones stand—
There, Christian, is thy fatherland.



CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

ITS GLORY AND PERPETUITY.

Much Land to be Possessed

* "There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed."

—Joshua 13, v. 1.

* This and the following discourses were delivered before the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, or at the dedication of new church edifices.

Much Land to be Possessed.



ANAAN was now occupied. So far, Joshua's mission was completed. But the territory already acquired, and what yet remained to be conquered, had still to be divided among the tribes. Both belonged to the Israelites, by God's decree, so that what would in ordinary cases have been foolish, was in the present instance the dictate of wisdom. Saving Caleb and Joshua, all the others who left Sinai had perished. Joshua also must soon pass away, and prudence therefore dictated a speedy completion of his work. Ere he passes away he must see each tribe provided for. There would thus be no room for future quarrels. As Moses had led them to Jordan, Joshua must appoint them their habitations on the other side, and put them in possession of the land promised to their fathers. He could not hope to live until all their enemies were subdued, and each tribe occupying his portion of the inheritance. But when the time arrived for them to settle down they would fight, and take possession of what they now held by the decree of Heaven. There was much land to be possessed. Many of the tribes were as yet unprovided

for. Moses had made certain allotments before the Israelites crossed the Jordan, but Joshua had made subsequent victories, and the entire unconquered land must be apportioned. He therefore at once sets himself to divide the inheritance, the details of which are given in this chapter, and it is worthy of remark as showing the fulfilment of prophecy, that in the directions given each tribe receives the possession predicted by the patriarch Jacob on his death-bed many years before. The land of Canaan was to be occupied by the Jews for a special purpose. It was not simply to be a place for profitable industry and social enjoyment, but where the true religion might have a centre. This was implied in the promise made to Abraham. In his seed all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. The Caananites were to be driven out because of their sins. Caanan was to become the Holy Land and the dwelling-place of Jehovah, a spot where piety, peace and plenty were to go hand in hand, and where the results of obedience to Heaven's laws were to be witnessed. And that it was so for many years, during the reigns of such monarchs as David and Solomon, the page of history testifies. Palestine was the envy and the dread of neighboring nations. "The kings saw it and marvelled; they were troubled and hastened away." Just so long as Israel remained faithful to God did they enjoy His blessing upon all the labor of their hands.

Applying the words of the text to the world at large, we may say, "There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed." Of the entire population of the globe, variously estimated from 1,100,000,000 up to 1,197,000,000, only 410,000,000 are Christians, and this number includes the Roman Catholic and Greek Churches. But Christ is yet to reign over this vast mass of heathenism. The world is His inheritance, as Canaan was that of the Israelites. The uttermost parts of the earth are to be His possession. His dominion is to extend from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends

of the earth. All kings are to fall down before Him, and all nations serve Him. And just as Joshua was commanded to possess the land of Canaan, so the Christian church is commissioned to send forth her ambassadors and fill the world with the glad tidings of salvation. The same spirit that achieved victory then is demanded now: faith in the promises and purpose of God, and courage to conquer in His name. We do not need, like Joshua and the Israelites, to fight for possession. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." The nations of the earth are for the most part ready and eager to receive the gospel. When missionary labor began, the highest civilizations of the world were heathen. There was no one place on the globe where christianity was in the ascendant. The whole commerce of the world, the military power of the world, the literature and learning and art of the world, were heathen. As has been strikingly said: "Every statue spoke a lie; in every picture was painted a lie; forms and colors were the handmaids and instruments of lies; there was not a book or a parchment, which was not the vehicle of a lie—the whole world, with the exception of Palestine, was written all over with heathenism." Now, after 1,800 years of missionary enterprise, what do we find? That there is not a single Government of any considerable power that is not Christian, and that those Governments that are lowest in morality and intelligence are heathen; that the missionaries of the cross are everywhere invited and welcomed; that false religions no longer wage war against Christianity, as in past days; and that even the enemies of the faith seem to admit that eventually superstition and paganism must fall before the supremacy of the truth as it is in Jesus. It is only a question of time when the waste and desolate places shall be beautified and the

desert made the garden of the Lord, and the day of universal jubilee will be all the sooner, as the Church is faithful to her trust.

Applying the language of the text to our own and other christian lands, we may say : "There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed." Narrowing the view to the continent of America, comprising the United States and Canada, with the great North-West—Australia and such colonies—a field is presented sufficient to tax the energies of the christian church for many years. These territories are capable of sustaining vast myriads. They offer abundant room and scope for the overflowing population of Europe and other lands. Commerce and steam and applied science are now opening up the most distant parts for settlement, and the church is called upon to follow with the blessings of that highest of all civilizations, which the Bible alone can give. Taking then the text in its widest application, are we not expressly taught in the Word of God that the supremacy of christianity is at hand ? "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." "They shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord ; for they shall know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." If, as is admitted, one of these passages has a special and primary reference to the Jewish nation, it does not exclude a wider application, for the Apostle Paul distinctly intimates that the restoration of the Jews to God's favor, and their acceptance of the truth, shall be the fulness of the Gentiles. Both then may be regarded as prophetic of the preaching and reception of the gospel in every land, and its influence upon society at large.

The mighty power and sweep of christian truth is foreshadowed by the phrase, "As the waters cover the sea." In ages long gone by a mighty flood of waters destroyed all flesh, but in the latter days streams of living water shall penetrate every part of the habitable globe, and bless all nations. Most aptly does the rise and

rush of waters describe the onward advance of the gospel—silent, equable, far spreading and irresistible ; giving little token of its coming, but fraught with tremendous results to all opposing obstacles ; sapping the foundations of strongholds, undermining the most solid masonry, and laughing to scorn the petty resistance of human skill. In the vision of Ezekiel the water came first to the ankles, then to the knees, then to the loins, then it was a river to swim in, that could not be passed over ; and thus the gospel does not take sudden and immediate possession of the world, but rather flows over it, as the tide, wave by wave, beats against the shore. “But whithersoever the rivers come there everything shall live.” As that great word painter, Dr. Guthrie, says : “ It does not follow that there is little doing because very little appears to be done. The roar and the flash of cannon, the shells shrieking through the tormented air, the bugle sounding for the stormers—these fill the eyes and ears of the spectators ; but that may be a less successful mode of attack than the silent, the secret, the undemonstrative labors of the men who are mining beneath the surface of the earth, and preparing for the day when a dull and muffled sound is heard, when the earth trembles and shakes ;—when the black cloud has blown away, battery, battlement, and bastion all lie in the dust.” Among other things taught us in the passages quoted are these : The gospel shall be published in all nations ; the gospel shall be preached to all nations ; the gospel shall be professed by all nations ; the gospel shall be practised in all nations. A few words on each of these points must suffice.

I. The gospel shall be published in all nations. The angelic song that announced the birth of Christ intimated the universal spread of the christian religion. The good tidings of great joy were to be to all people. If we admit that God has given a revelation of His will, it follows that His creatures must possess it. Why that revelation was not given all at once in a completed form, and

why to this day millions of the human family are ignorant of its existence, are questions apart from our present theme. But what such passages assert is that the christian religion shall yet be universally disseminated, and every man in his own tongue be able to read the wonderful words and works of God. The marvellous spread of the truth at the present day, the translation of the Bible into so many dialects and languages, and its eager perusal by barbarous tribes, all increase our faith in the speedy fulfilment of the promise, that the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord. In the first 1,500 years of the history of christianity it gained 100,000,000 of adherents ; in the next 300 years 100,000,000 more ; but in the last 100 years it has gained 210,000,000 more—that is, in the last 83 years, Christianity has gained more adherents than in the previous eighteen centuries. At this rate of progress, is it utopian to believe that before the close of the present era there will be 1,200,000,000 nominal christians in the world?

II. The gospel shall be preached to all nations. “The Lord gave the word ; great was the company of those that published it.” “This Gospel of the Kingdom,” says Christ, “shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations.” And in the book of Revelation John says :—“I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred and tongue and people.” That the ministry is of divine ordination need not be proved. That it is one of the chief agencies in evangelizing the world the Scriptures everywhere assert. Without the voice of the living preacher and the accompanying omnipotent power of God’s spirit, the truth of itself effects but little. The Ethiopian eunuch, although he had in his hands the marvellous and minute prediction of Isaiah concerning Christ’s humiliation and death, understood not its meaning. Not that the Bible is a sealed book to all save priests and learned men, and that none else may presume to unlock its

treasures, but that in addition to the printed page there is needed the earnest appeal and the pointed application of the preacher. The results of missionary labor in heathen lands, as seen in the abandonment of idolatry, and the rapid growth of christian congregations, the conviction of sin and repentance towards God, which follow the preaching of the word, prove the necessity and value of the living voice.

III. The gospel shall be professed or avowed by all nations. "Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers." "From one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord." "The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." The condition of the world is still perplexing, even to the eye of faith. There is so much that is hopeful and so much that is discouraging in the affairs of nations, that we are often weary in waiting for the reign of righteousness and peace, and good will to men. But the light is bright within the cloud. Vast changes are taking place in the kingdoms of the earth. In almost every instance, a higher kind of civilization is being sought after. Despotisms are being softened; autocrats are gradually acknowledging the rights of the oppressed, and there is at least a nominal recognition of the great principle, that "Righteousness exalteth a nation, and that sin is a reproach to any people."

IV. The gospel shall be practised in all nations. The making known to the world that a revelation has been given, is but the initial step in the progress of Christianity. Obedience and holy living must follow. "He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths." "Men shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nations shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down

with the kid ; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.” “ All ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee.” “ There shall be upon the bells of the horses, holiness unto the Lord.” “ Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of Hosts.” According to His promise we look for the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. That the practice of New Testament morality is steadily advancing, and that men are valued and respected not so much by their creed as by their conduct, cannot I think be gainsaid. There is still great disparity between the profession and conduct of many christians. But to be a nominal church member without corresponding purity of life, is now regarded as an insult alike to God and man. In the high places of the land it is not now so unusual to find men of pronounced evangelical views, whose characters give weight to their opinions, and whose sincerity and honesty are beyond all question. And beyond the geographical limits of christian lands a higher standard of conduct is now demanded. Cunning, deceit, falsehood, intemperance, and laxity of morals are regarded as incompatible with the discharge of the ordinary obligations of life, and prejudicial to the best interests of society.

But in addition to national integrity the masses shall then possess a saving knowledge of the gospel. Not that even then there shall be perfection in the individual or the nation. But religious feeling and devout reverence for the name of God shall prevail far more widely, and operate more potently than now. “ I will put my law in their inward parts,” says the prophet, speaking in the name of the Almighty, “ and write it in their hearts. They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest.” This implies indelible impressions of divine truth. They shall acknowledge, submit to, and delight in Zion’s King. Not Israel alone, nor Europe alone,

but the dusky sons of Ethiopia, the wild savage of the desert, who now roams the forest and dies without the fear of man, from the least to the greatest, all shall know the Lord. Religious life at the present day is formal, a sentiment, a comely garment. It is held by a loose grasp. It does not direct the life. It is assumed in too many cases for display, as the Pharisees wore their phylacteries. It is restricted to stated seasons and solemnities, instead of touching the life at every point. Men are afraid to own their faith and publicly avow their principles. The motto of the christian's conduct, "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," is but partially interpreted and acted out. The single men that keep alive the divine light, but glimmer as watchers' tapers by the bedside of the dying. But all this hollow, half-hearted espousal of the truth, shall take end in the days of which we speak. Moral darkness shall vanish before the rising of the sun of righteousness, as the king of day dispels the shadows of the dawn. In Swedish Lapland, during six weeks of the year, there is seen the singular spectacle of a midnight sun. There is scarcely any night, for the sun never sets. On the 24th of June, when the midnight sun is seen in all its glory, large numbers come from all parts of the globe to gaze upon this singular phenomenon. But faith looks forward to something grander than the midnight sun, when the light of the gospel shall flash from shore to shore, continent to continent, and pole to pole. The land of the midnight sun occupies but a small portion of our globe, but the day draws near when it shall be said of every spot of earth, "There is no night there." "Thy sun shall no more go down, for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." For ten years the Grecian sentinels kept their watchtowers, waiting and watching anxiously for the beacon fires which should announce the fall of Troy. At last the signal came—a flash of light—and from tower to tower the fiery message leaped, over land and sea, until from Ida to Argos the news of vic-

tory had been carried on the wing of flame. And thus shall it be when the watchmen on the walls of Zion proclaim to an expectant world the final victories of the truth. That day is coming. Redemption is drawing nigh.

Watchman, tell us of the night,
For the morning seems to dawn ;
Traveller, darkness takes its flight,
Doubt and terror are withdrawn :
Watchman, let thy wanderings cease,
Hie thee to thy quiet home ;
Traveller, lo ! the Prince of Peace,
Lo ! the Son of God is come.

And now, finally, that we may be incited to seek nothing less than the ultimate christianization of the globe, let me remind you of Christ's last words to his disciples : " All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth ; Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you ; and, lo ! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." All Christ's sayings are precious. Those after his resurrection are the most precious and fragrant in the Bible. The crucifixion was over. The resurrection was now an acknowledged fact. For the last time on earth he appears to the disciples upon a mountain top in Galilee, and gives them their commission and his farewell benediction. Christ's work on earth was not to fully establish and consolidate the church, but to appoint and prepare others to do this. The time had now come when, under the dispensation of the spirit, his servants should begin that campaign, which goes on without cessation until he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. And what language was better fitted to cheer them and give them the assurance of ultimate victory than this : " All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth,"—here is kingly omnipotence. " Go ye therefore and teach or make disciples,"—the weapon being the word of God ? " All nations,"—here

is the extent. "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,"—here is the mark of sonship and citizenship in the new kingdom. And then follows the promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." To whom were these words addressed? Primarily, but not exclusively to the apostles. The great work to which they were called was not to be accomplished in one or many generations. The subjects of this promise were to exist long after the death of the apostles. Nor is the commission limited to their immediate official successors. The apostolic office was not permanent. There is no proof in scripture of what is technically called apostolic succession. It seems strange in view of the clear statements of God's word and the practice of the early christian church that such a dogma should be held. Presbyters and bishops were on a perfect equality for several centuries after the ascension of Christ, and it was only when corruption began to infect the church, and the clergy sought preferment and worldly honors, that the different orders were introduced and the purity of the ministry subverted.

The true application of these words is to the church universal, collectively and individually, specially to ministers, but not less to all professing christians, whether office-bearers in the church or not. As applied to Christ's ambassadors, it implies that He will qualify them for their work. With the command he gives the ability. He imparts to them a knowledge of the truth, not from human reason, but by the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, and he gives them faith in the truth, by a personal and experimental acquaintance with its power; for no man can preach comfortably, and seldom successfully, without a firm belief in the omnipotence of God's word. It further implies that He will accompany their message by His spirit. All is useless apart from this. The dry bones in the valley apart from the breath of the four winds, remained passive. But when the breath came upon them they lived and stood upon their

feet, an exceeding great army. Paul depended for success, not on the enticing words of man's wisdom, but upon the demonstration of the spirit, that the faith of his hearers should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. God is never absent from His church. Whatever of failure or declension there is in the carrying out of His plans for the salvation of the world is not chargeable to the Almighty. We often in our prayers speak as if He was indifferent and lukewarm—at a distance from us—only coming on special occasions to rouse His people from torpor and spiritual lethargy, whereas the cause of our deadness is in our own idleness. He has never once been absent from His church since its organization. Nor has there ever been any cessation in the progress of His kingdom. The work wrought out in the night of the dark ages was about as important as that which has been accomplished in the daylight of the world. There is no standing still of God's work. "It rests as trees rest in winter, when they are preparing for stronger growth in spring." All the tokens of good that as churches and office-bearers we experience are due to His presence. The increase of our membership, the conversion of sinners, the edifying of believers, the zeal and activity which is manifested in the different departments of christian labor, are due to the power of God's Spirit brooding over His church and inflaming the hearts of his servants. But it is needful to bear in mind that the promise of His presence, so that it might be felt in mighty revivals of religion, depends upon our faithful adherence to the terms of the commission, "Go teach all nations." Preach Christ, initiate by baptism, admit by personal profession of faith, hold up the cross as the Alpha and Omega of the ministry. So doing we have a right to expect, nay to demand, a blessing. A plant does two things—it maintains and it propagates itself. And a living healthy church will maintain and extend itself. The same marvellous success that crowned the efforts of the Apostolic church is ours, if we are steadfast and persistent in our endeav-

ors to evangelize the world, and spread the savour of Christ's name among all the nations of the earth. If we had constantly this promise before us in our holy engagements, how it would inspire us to noble deeds of daring! The joy of heaven consists in the divine presence, but that peace and hopefulness and courage, which are so necessary upon earth, are the possession of God's servants even now. Nothing but the knowledge that when Christ departed from the disciples in bodily form, he was to remain a living and controlling force in their lives, could have sustained them amid their arduous labors. Nay, they were taught that by His spirit he could and would do more for them than if he had continued in the flesh. Believing this fact they went everywhere as men moving in a region above the noise and tumult of faction and passion, resisting all attempts to seduce them from their ministry, and joyfully bearing whatever pain and shame attended them. So rapidly, indeed, did they carry the gospel to the very furthest limits of the then known world, that had its progress in succeeding ages corresponded with the Apostolic era, "They had not been long in heaven ere they had seen the work done which they had so well begun." We feel an inspiration for the ordinary work of life when in the presence of a friend wiser and stronger than ourselves. The fact that we are watched by eager eyes of love is an impulse to attain the highest possible distinction. And such a feeling, intensified by the sense of God's presence with us, has a marvellous effect on the work of the ministry. Whether, as some believe, the spirits of the departed look down upon us from their starry homes we know not. But of this we are certain, that the Saviour from his exalted seat in the heavens, is an interested onlooker of the great conflict in which we are engaged. The days of His earthly sojourning are ended, but not His communion with His saints. He has risen. The grave is vacant. The glory of the opening heavens has hid Him from our view, but He lives again in the lives of all believers and renders

them invincible against the hosts of hell. "He that is with us is more than all they that are against us." Trusting His grace, which is sufficient for us, and in His strength, which is made perfect in weakness, glorying and taking pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake, and magnifying the grandeur of our vocation, let us possess the land. No kingly throne is ever to be compared with a christian pulpit. For, in the words of Keble :

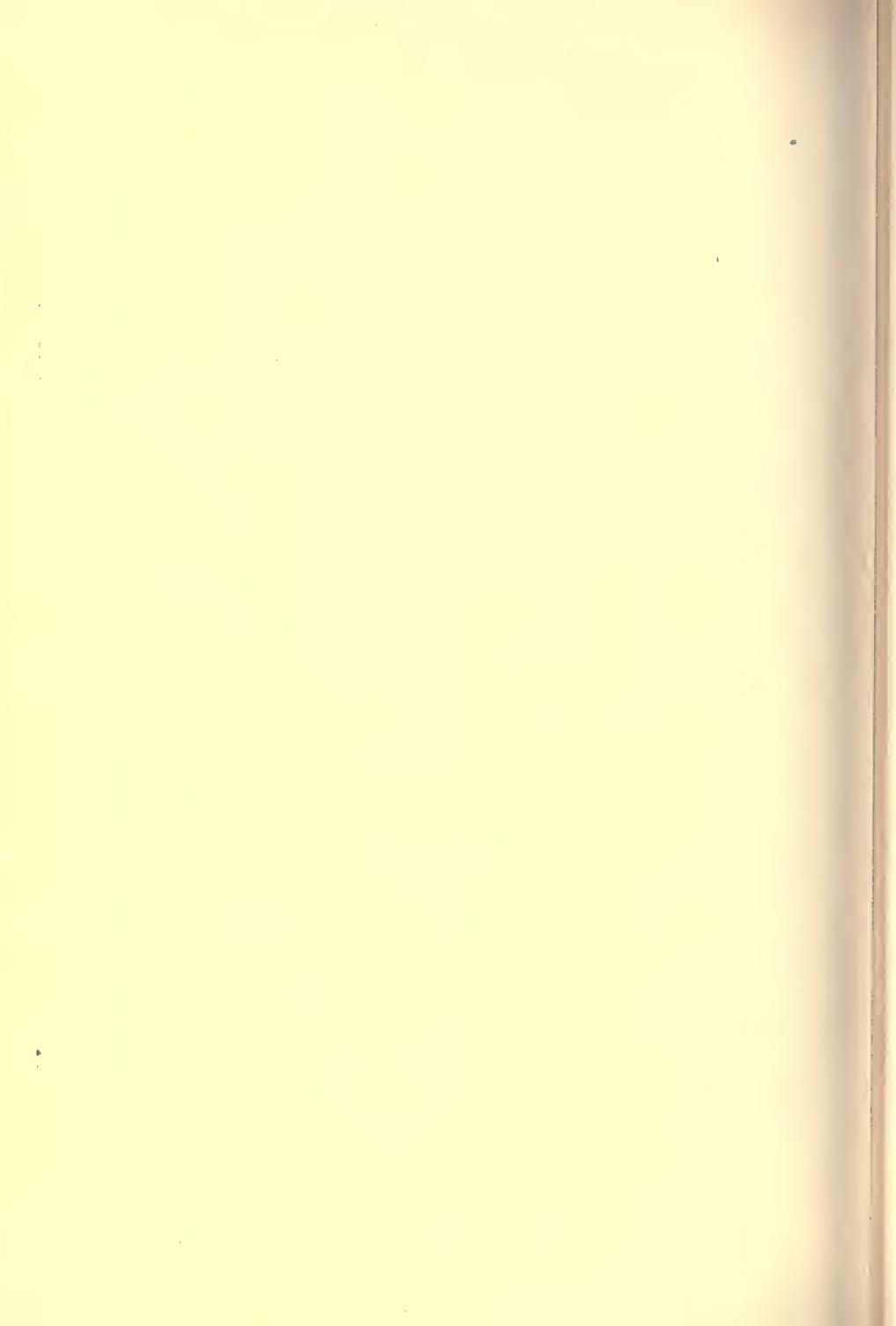
Nearest Heaven has bade thee stand,
The ark to touch and bear,
With incense of pure hearts' desire
To heap the censer's sacred fire,
The snow-white ephod wear.
Why should we crave the worldling's breath
On whom the Saviour deigned to breathe,
To whom His kings are given,
Who lead the choir where angels meet,
With angel's food our brethren greet,
And pour the drink of Heaven !

Fathers and Brethren.—Although my theme to-night may be considered somewhat commonplace, I do not deem it inappropriate, when addressing the representatives of a church, whose great work in missions, and whose energies at the present moment are being directed towards the fullest equipment of our theological halls, in order that a learned and godly ministry may be trained. We believe in the science of theology ; that men must be taught to teach that science, as much as astronomy, and geology, and cognate themes. We believe in creeds, for no man can act or think intelligently without a creed. We believe that a man's moral convictions must take permanent form, in order to practical results. We reverence those men of God, of whom many here are descendants, who wisely concluded that without ample preparation for the gospel ministry, a man was in great measure powerless to cope with infidelity in the abstract or unbelief in the concrete. We believe

in the commission to preach the gospel to every creature, but not that every creature is to preach it, without the call of God or man. The principles which guided our forefathers in laying the foundations of this church were eternally true, and the men they sent into the pulpit knew thoroughly what they professed to teach, and spoke because they believed. We, following at a great distance indeed these mighty men of God, seek to imbibe their spirit and carry out their designs. Believing in God's absolute sovereignty, while at the same time recognizing man's individual responsibility, we send forth our missionaries to preach a full and free salvation in every corner of our land, and far beyond its vast limits. Our aim is—

To build the Universal Church,
Lofty as is the love of God,
And ample as the wants of man.





Showers of Blessing.

“The showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain.”

—Jeremiah 3, v. 3.

“I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing ; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season : there shall be showers of blessing.”

—Ezekiel 34, v. 26.

Showers of Blessing.

HIN THE fourteenth chapter of this book of Jeremiah, we have a striking picture of the terrible horrors resulting from a protracted drought, when the heavens are as brass and the earth is as iron. "Judah mourneth, and the gates thereof languish ; they are black unto the ground ; and the cry of Jerusalem is gone up. And their nobles have sent their little ones to the waters ; they came to the pits, and found no water ; they returned with their vessels empty ; they were ashamed and confounded, and covered their heads. Yea, the hind also calved in the field, and forsook it, because there was no grass. And the wild asses did stand in the high places ; they snuffed up the wind like dragons ; their eyes did fail, because there was no grass." The cause of such a judgment we are at no loss to understand. It was for the iniquities and backsliding of his people, that God sealed up the clouds of water, and brought barrenness and famine upon the inhabitants of the land. By such dealings God would have them realize that He was cognizant of their sinful conduct, and would be avenged because of their ingratitude.

In our own climate we know full well the evil effects of drought. Although such a calamity has never prevailed to the extent of famine, in some cases it has materially affected the social comforts of the inhabitants, and paralyzed the energies of commerce. At such a season of the year as the present, we need frequent showers to promote vegetation, and ripen the crops of the field. A few weeks scorching heat, untempered by genial and copious rains, makes a vast difference in the returns of the husbandman.

It is entirely different in other portions of the globe. In Egypt the Nile periodically overflows its banks and hastens growth. By a wise arrangement of Providence to meet the lack of rain and dew, it seldom fails at the appointed time. In other countries provision is made in the soil and roots, to remain for a much longer period without rain than in our Northern Zone. Although the ground may be dry and burned, the roots carry with them a life superior to the accidents and severity of drought. In our climate, ere the refreshing rain came down, the seeds and roots would die beyond all hope of germination, but there they quicken into life, unaffected by the long periods of scorching heat, that have long retarded their growth and seemingly exhausted their vitality.

The analogies that exist between the natural and the spiritual world are many and obvious. It may not, therefore, be unprofitable in present circumstances to enquire into the causes and consequences of spiritual drought in the church and in individual souls, and also for our encouragement to glance at the promises of spiritual refreshing that are promised the church under the New Testament dispensation. The condition described by the prophet Jeremiah is a sad one: "The showers have been withholden, and there have been no latter rain,"--that of Ezekiel is full of encouragement and hope: "I will make them and the places around my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing."

I remark, first, that in the church of God, as in the natural world, we need constant refreshing showers to promote the growth of individual christians and advance the cause of righteousness. Occasions indeed intervene when more is needed in the natural world than the refreshing shower; when the rain descends not gently and noiselessly but in torrents, tearing deep furrows and fissures in the earth, and crushing the tender plants that cannot stand such violent treatment. No one disputes the value of such occasional deluges, whatever temporary hurt may follow; but the very necessity for such avalanches of rain proves how much better are the nightly dews and timely showers of spring and summer. It is just because these have been withheld for a protracted period that floods of water, accompanied by the thunder storm and lightning, are demanded to drench the ground, purify the atmosphere, and save from famine.

Now, in the history of God's kingdom upon earth, there are periods when revivals of religion are so powerful as to indicate an unusual abundance of spiritual feeling. Without such seasons, certain churches would lose all their vitality. As we thank God for unusual deluges of rain, to make the burnt up grass put on new verdure, and fill the heads of corn, so we have good cause to feel grateful when such mighty convulsions and spiritual quickenings occur in christian communities. But better than the occasional thunder storm are the regular descending rains and the nightly dew drops that fringe the leaves of flowers and sparkle like diamonds on the grass; and better than exceptional and wondrous outpourings of God's Spirit are the constant manifestations of His grace, unattended though they may be by moral revolutions, but not less quietly but effectively building up and maturing souls for the paradise above. But for these long seasons of drought, when the ground is chapt, and the wells are waterless, and the wild asses snuff up the wind like dragons, and their eyes fail them because there is no

grass, there would be no occasion for the rain storms that refresh the thirsty ground ; and, but for long periods of spiritual decay in the church, when prayer is fitful and christian activity all but dead, there would be less occasion for special agencies, which the Holy Spirit often blesses to revive declining churches and prevent individuals from complete paralysis of religious feeling.

Every church should seek constant baptisms of the Holy Spirit. If we suffer from spiritual drought, let us not foolishly talk about a mysterious Providence that waters other portions of the vineyard and leaves our special corner dry and parched. It is the great desire of Christ that His church should prosper—that it should be continuously faithful—that, without long periods of weakness and inactivity, it should go forward to greater conquests. If it is otherwise, let us see to it, as ministers and office-bearers and members, that we are not guilty in the sight of God. Where prayer is restrained, and family religion is neglected, and attendance upon ordinances is fitful, where there is greater relish for the pleasures and amusements of the fashionable world than fellowship with the unseen and eternal, nothing can be expected but the decline of piety. “The showers are withholden, and there is no latter rain.”

This leads me to remark secondly, that seasons of spiritual drought are generally the consequences of despising or misimproving the means of grace. The whole history of Israel is evidence of this fact. For their sins and provocations, God frequently visited His chosen people with a famine of bread as well as a famine of the Word of life. Temporal mercies, when undervalued or abused, are often withdrawn, and gospel blessings, when slighted, are often diminished. “Jerusalem,” says the prophet, “remembered in the days of her affliction and of her miseries all her pleasant things which she had in the days of old, when her people fell into the hand of the enemy and none did help her.” In the silence and solitude of the Babylonish captivity, how strikingly was this veri-

fied, as sitting by the streams of Babel the Jews thought upon the past! "We wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"

A famine of bread is a terrible scourge, but far greater is the evil when the candlestick of ordinances is removed, and men perish for divine sustenance. This was the culmination of God's anger against His chosen people as well as the unfaithful churches of Asia Minor. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the word of God." Again, speaking by the mouth of Isaiah, and reproving them for despising their privileges, he says: "I will lay the vineyard waste; it shall not be pruned nor digged. I will also command the clouds that they rain not upon it." And to the church in Ephesus, John is commanded to say: "Remember from whence thou art fallen and repent, and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of its place except thou repent."

Worldly-minded men cannot feel the loss of public or private means of grace; but God's own children deeply mourn the withdrawal of such privileges. The christians of Antioch, when Chrysostom their minister was banished, judged it a greater deprivation than the absence of the sun in the firmament. In the days of Popish persecution, when God's servants were hurried away to martyrdom, their flocks met them on the way to prison with their little ones in their arms, and throwing themselves at their feet, cried out: "Who shall instruct these poor babes? Who shall ease our afflicted conscience? Who shall lead us in the way of life?" Nor can there be anything but intense sorrow, where gospel ordinances long enjoyed and appreciated are removed. The prosperity of the nation, the stability of civil government, and the prevalence of virtue, as well as the salvation of souls, depend upon the continuance of the faithful preaching of the Word.

I remark, thirdly, that seasons of spiritual drought are not less fatal to the interests of true religion, because they steal upon us insensibly and unobserved. It is so with drought in the natural world. We cannot predict its coming, nor are we probably aware of its length until we see the sad results in the burnt up ground. One, two, or three weeks pass without rain, before we begin to realize the actual condition of affairs, or are alarmed for the future. It is just so in periods of spiritual decline. Outwardly we see no symptoms of change. The church is open. The means of grace are waited upon, after a certain formal routine. The prayer-meeting is kept alive. There is the usual amount of religious talk and prayer for the extension of Christ's kingdom. But in all this, there is no real longing after greater holiness and perfection of character. At last we begin to see a palpable deterioration in the spiritual power of the membership; a deadness of feeling and indifference, that threaten disaster and ruin to the visible body of believers. Nay, in some cases things are so hopeless that there is scarce vitality remaining to measure the extent of the evil, or to agonize in prayer for Almighty aid to quicken the dead!

Nearly every congregation contains more or less nominal christians, whose zeal and enthusiasm have sadly diminished since their reception into the church. The gleanings of former harvests were more than the entire vintage now. The things which remain are ready to die. A spiritual lethargy and lukewarmness in the service of the Master, strangely contradictory of the glowing fervor of by-gone years, prevails. The heart is uncultivated. There is a sourness in the conversation that ill comports with the disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus. Means are no longer used to keep the graces polished, and the armor sharp and glittering. There is little or none of the pleasure formerly experienced in christian fellowship, in sacramental seasons and the general work of the denomination. The soil is hard—unmoistened by the refreshing rain—unproductive and unprofitable.

Need I say that such a condition is dangerous? It is a dishonorable one for any child of God to occupy. It may not be fatal, for the ploughshare of severe discipline can bring the most callous backslider to consciousness of guilt and penitence for sin:

Spent barren land you can restore and nourish;
Decayed Christians, God can cause to flourish.

But it is only after severe pruning that spiritual life is revived, and the soul restored to its normal condition. Before the dews of heaven can benefit such souls, and the fallow ground become productive, a preparatory process is needful to quicken the hard, stolid, passionless affections, and convulse to their very foundations that deep seated avarice and indolence which prevent consecration to the cause of God.

A worldly minded church, however generous and lavish its contributions may be to charitable and missionary objects, is the greatest of all hindrances to the spread and success of the gospel. The more numerous the membership in such a case, the greater is the evil. However sincere young converts are in entering such a communion, unless special grace prevents, their piety will soon reach the low level of the mass. Apart from the constant operations of God's spirit, manifested in holy deeds of self-denial, a church may become a hindrance to the progress of the truth, a stumbling block to enquirers, and a byword on the lips of scoffers.

This brings us briefly to speak of the passage in Ezekiel so full of encouragement and hope to all who seek the prosperity of Zion. The language refers to Messianic times, when God's controversy with His people should cease, the scattered ones be restored to Jerusalem, and blessings in large abundance crown the latter days. Peace is to prevail throughout the land; the wild beasts of the forest are no longer to molest or terrify the traveller, so that he may dwell in the wilderness in safety, and sleep in the woods unharmed. The trees of the field are to yield their fruit, and the land give forth

its increase, and the yoke of slavery be forever broken. For in the words already quoted, which may be regarded as a summation of all these covenanted mercies—"I will make them, saith the Lord, and the places round about my hill a blessing ; and I will cause the showers to come down in his season ; there shall be showers of blessing." There can be no doubt, I think, but that the prophecy refers to the gospel dispensation. The final ingathering of the Jews, the restoration of Mount Zion, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem, belong to a period which precedes the winding up of the present dispensation. The nature of the blessings spoken of, however, admit of different interpretations. Is it temporal blessings only of which the prophet speaks—or spiritual, or both combined ? Are we to take the language in a literal or figurative sense ? Are we to understand the seasonable showers mentioned as nothing beyond the spring and summer rains, or are the words typical of heavenly blessings and the outpouring of God's Spirit upon His chosen people ?

In its primary signification, I doubt not, the prophet referred to temporal blessings. If you read over carefully the judgments threatened Israel, you will find that the blessings promised in the context are exactly their counterpart. The judgments included years of trouble and desolation, famine and pestilence, war and bloodshed, calamities of every form and degree of severity, even approaching to the bondage of Egypt and the sufferings of the wilderness. God's anger was to be manifested in these more tangible and striking evils. His presence as the avenger of their sins was to be seen in the withdrawal of all those comforts which constitute national prosperity, and the prevalence of all those plagues which accompany overthrow and destruction. But now the scene changes. The temporal blessings long withheld are restored. Instead of famine, there is plenty ; instead of war, peace ; instead of internal commotion and disorder, complete security and protection.

The holy city becomes again the joy of the whole earth and the centre of the world's salvation. Nay, not only does Mount Zion enjoy the special favor of heaven, but all the environs of the hill—the places round about it, and the people inhabiting the adjacent territories—share in the manifold blessings predicted.

But, while I understand this to be the primary meaning of the text, there can be no doubt that spiritual blessings are also implied. The entire prophecy speaks of a condition of things wherein God and His people would stand towards each other in an entirely different relationship from that which formerly existed. These temporal gifts are in reality the smallest part of the blessings promised. They are indicative of the richest outpourings of grace, and a proof that God will again return and dwell among His chosen people, restoring to them privileges and honors with which the glory and grandeur of a bygone dispensation, could not for a moment compare. The pious Jew, I doubt not, regarded such prophecies of coming good in this higher sense. It was by such general statements that he was led to recognize imperfectly at least, the character of gospel times, and look forward to the advent of a greater than King David who should build another temple of fairer proportions than the first, and repair the desolations of Jerusalem.

Intended originally for the comfort of God's ancient people, the promise has a direct application to the church at the present day. All the blessings promised Israel are ours. When the words of the text are verified there shall be but one fold and one shepherd. The unbelief of the scattered nation shall give place to unfeigned loyalty and hearty reception of the truths of christianity. We do not yet see its entire fulfilment, but we live in an age when the beginning of the end can be clearly discerned. It is ours to pray and to labor, that the christian church may enjoy these showers of blessing, that the parched soil may be softened and made ready for an abundant harvest.

From these words then we are taught, first, that the church of the latter days is to be the recipient of special favors: "I will cause the shower to come down in his season ; there shall be showers of blessing." I am not careful whether you include the literal as well as the spiritual meaning in its application to the church of the present day. I believe that the time is coming when God's blessing shall rest to a much larger extent than at present upon the productions of the field, and when the husbandman shall reap far more abundant harvests than are at present secured under the most favorable conditions. Secondly, and taking the passage in its higher meaning, as indicating the outpourings of the Spirit, notice (a) the extent of the blessing ; not drops, but showers of rain ; not the slight and all but imperceptible rustling of the leaves, but the mighty wind that brings abundance of rain. In a word, it is a recurrence of Pentecostal times, when the presence of God in His church shall be plainly recognized by mighty awakenings and in-gatherings, not occurring only once in a century or after long periods of spiritual drouth, but accompanying and sealing the simple proclamation of the gospel from year to year. Notice again (b) that these showers are to be seasonable. How much we long for timely rains to water the earth, and how much depends upon their coming ! It is not good to have sunshine always. The plants and shrubs and flowers wither under continued scorching heat. There must be showers in spring and showers in summer to fill the ears of corn with sap and substance, that harvest home may be a time of grateful joy. And just such seasonable showers of grace are needed in the church of Christ. We may labor perseveringly with human souls, and the gospel ploughshare may turn up the fallow soil, and good seed may be plentifully sown, but all is in vain until

God the plenteous shower bestows,
And sends salvation down.

How frequently have we witnessed such emergencies in our different fields! There have been indications of a glorious work of grace; unwonted seriousness and solemnity have prevailed in the congregation; the truth has seemed to fall impressively upon both young and old; the little cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, begins, as we fondly imagine, to cover the horizon, and we look for floods of mercy to fall upon the hearts of sinners, when lo! it passes by, and our hopes are disappointed. If the seasonable showers had but fallen, what rich clusters of fruit might have been gathered, and how many precious souls saved from death!

Now, in the period spoken of there shall be no such failures. The showers shall be copious and seasonable. There shall be no drawbacks in spiritual husbandry. The sower shall return bringing his sheaves with him.

Notice again (*c*) that the blessings thus conferred upon the church of the latter days shall mightily increase her efficiency in evangelizing the world. Individual believers shall become centres of blessing to all within the reach of their influence. We speak of the efforts and victories of the church too frequently as if it were an agency quite distinct from the membership. We lose sight of personal obligations. Many who take credit for work accomplished deserve, in reality, nothing of the honor that belongs to it. The more willing and zealous bear the burdens, while the mass rest satisfied, looking on and applauding results. Not more than one-third of the moral power of the church is practically developed, whilst the unemployed talents of the others act as a heavy drag upon her progress. It is not by such indifference and neutrality that gospel victories are to be hastened. We may not all be equally gifted or occupy the same vantage ground. The stars and planets are not all of equal magnitude and brilliancy, but there is not a star that twinkles in the midnight sky but has its important mission to fulfil. To everything in nature a distinct part has been assigned, and to

every intelligent being a separate work has been allotted.

Now, in the period spoken of, every gospel hearer shall become a positive blessing to his fellowmen. God's people shall be willing in the day of His power. The love of Christ will constrain and impel. The name of christian will be a synonym for all that is noble and pure and elevating. The whole neighborhood will feel the influence of holy lives. Men of the world will recognize the spirit and impress of the Master, as the coin bears the image of the sovereign. Not only so, but the church in her collective capacity shall more than ever bless the world. Mount Zion shall not only be the recipient of special favors, but a source of unmixed good to all the places round about it. The visible body of Christ's followers shall be the most powerful agency in society. It shall be felt in every department of the state ; it shall direct the councils of the nation ; it shall mould public opinion on all important questions affecting man's highest welfare. It shall command universal reverence and respect, for to be associated with the church in any capacity whatever will be regarded as the highest honor.

This whole subject is well fitted to gladden the hearts of God's servants who are seeking after a larger measure of personal holiness and who are longing for the set time to favor Zion. Not in human organizations, although these are necessary, does the vitality of the church consist, but in the spirit of the living God. The pipes and reservoirs and waterworks of a city are valuable, but capacious reservoirs and the most comprehensive net work of mains and hydrants will not alone give water. The clouds full and overflowing are essential to the effectiveness of the whole. The old log pumps or the old oaken bucket will bring forth more water out of the farm house well fed by a living spring than the most costly and complicated hydraulic apparatus out of a lake whose springs are dried up. And so it is in religious efforts ; unless showers of blessing come in their season, all human devices and appointments are in vain.

“Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.”

Out in the harbor of Marseilles, says tradition, four galleons are standing with their prows turned eastward, and their sails idly flapping in the wind. Their decks are filled with crusaders eager to embark for the Holy Land. A week has elapsed, and still the vessels have not moved their anchorage. At length, impatient of delay, raising their helmets they all with one accord join in the hymn: “*Veni Creator Spiritus.*” As they lowered their arms bearing the symbol of the cross, the sound of a rushing wind was heard, and that same evening, with sails set in the name of God, and filled with His breath, they were flying eastward on the open sea. And thus, when our spiritual life and energies are becalmed, we pray that gales from heaven may quicken the pulsations of our being.

O Lord, we gather silently, and hush our breath,
And look and wait—
A longing, eager multitude,
Within and round Thy gate.
O Lord, we wait the sound from heaven,
Which shall revive our drooping love,
And make us strong and make us wise,
And fit us for the life above.
O Spirit, come with power divine,
And make these waiting people Thine !

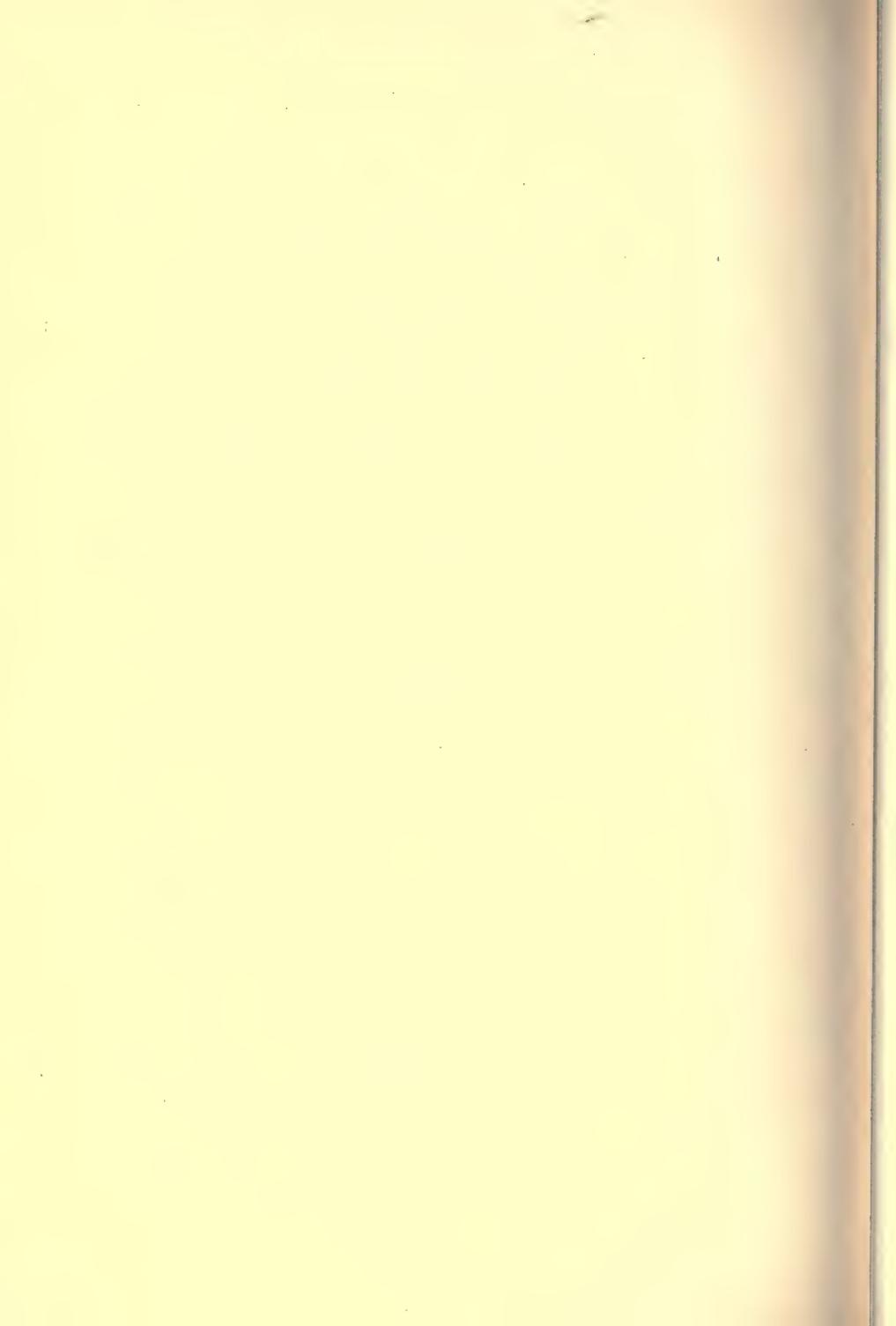
Fathers and Brethren,—We meet again in General Assembly to review the work of another year: to sum up results, and to record our sense of God’s goodness in the different departments of christian labor in which we are engaged. I have not attempted an elaborate or learned discussion of debated points in theology, which more or less engage the attention of thoughtful men at the present day. These we can safely leave in the hands of our professors, to be dealt with in the class-room. Seldom, indeed, ought they to form the theme of ordinary pulpit discourse, and only in very ex-

ceptional circumstances is it needful to make them the subject of an Assembly sermon. No one questions the imperative necessity of a learned ministry, in an age when the faith of God's saints is attacked by an insidious rationalism that seeks to deify human reason at the expense of infinite wisdom. But beyond this we need in our pulpits "the tongue of fire," and the fire ever burning upon the altars of our homes. This, and this alone, can make our work permanent and progressive. There is some danger, when the resources of a church are equal to the outlay, of resting satisfied with tangible results as satisfactory evidence of vital godliness in the membership at large. But is it always so? We gladly acknowledge the greatly increased liberality of our membership for the spread of the gospel at home and abroad. The silver and the gold for the beautifying and enrichment of the temple are not withheld. Nor dare we for a moment question the sincerity of the motives that makes magnificent gifts to the Church of Christ in these latter days. But is there not, in spite of all, good grounds for asking—are we, as ministers and office-bearers, growing in holiness? Is the religion of the age characterized by greater personal sanctity than formerly, or is the wide-spread and bustling activity that prevails due to other causes than the direct operations of God's spirit? In Christ's parable of the vine and branches, He not only insists upon the union of the branches with the vine in order to increase fruit-bearing, but also that the fruit should remain. "I have chosen you and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." Indwelling abiding piety produces ever-green christians. They flourish like the palm tree, and grow like cedars in Lebanon. They bring forth fruit in old age. And so it is with churches. The secret of their abiding strength and vigor is in constant communication with the Most High. "There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God. God is in the midst of her: she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that

right early." As we find it said of the waters that Ezekiel saw in vision by the banks of the Chebar, intended, doubtless, to symbolize the onward majestic sweep of the gospel—"Everything shall live, whither the river cometh. On this side and on that shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit be consumed, because their waters issued out of the sanctuary."

The past year has been marked by considerable commercial depression. Almost every class has felt the stringency. Mercantile institutions have been forced to limit their operations or suspend payment. Large business houses, enjoying the confidence of the community, have gone down; and men, esteemed millionaires, reduced to comparative want. Does all this mean nothing? Are there no lessons for christian churches to learn? Are monetary convulsions and failures in harvests to be referred to accident and unforeseen calamities? Nay, verily, much of it is God's judgment upon unrighteous speculation and undue love of riches, which still withholds God's claims for the evangelizing of the world. By such visitations are we taught that men are but stewards of God's bounties; that there is something nobler than to hoard up riches, and that penurious giving sooner or later brings a curse!





God Dwelling with Men.

“ But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth ? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this house which I have built ! ”

—2nd Chronicles 6, v. 18.

God Dwelling With Men.



THE condescension of God in dwelling with men upon the earth, is one of the most amazing, and at the same time comforting truths of Scripture. When we take into account Jehovah's entire independence of the creature—His majesty and glory—His absolute and infinite greatness and holiness ; and contrast all this with the weakness, the sinfulness, the ignorance and degradation of fallen humanity, it seems impossible to entertain such a thought. There is really nothing in man to attract the notice or regard of his Maker. To a holy being there is rather everything to repel, in our guilty and polluted world. The original purity and innocence, which for a brief period brought heaven and earth into friendly contact, no longer exists. And yet, marvellous though it be, it is none the less true, that God delights to dwell with man upon the earth. The pure society and rapturous adoration of heaven are not more pleasing to Him than the praises and reverential worship of dependent mortals. He not only bends a listening ear to their cries, and accepts their sacrifices, but, in a more than merely figurative sense, dwells among them, giving the

most satisfactory and conclusive evidences of His presence to the eye of faith. "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion, more than all the dwellings of Jacob."

It was this thought that filled the mind of Solomon when he gave utterance to the words of the text. It was no ordinary occasion when, as the representative of the assembled Israelites, he offered up this prayer, and led the devotions of the people. It was a day long looked forward to with joyful anticipations, and long afterwards remembered by the pious Jew. The tabernacle that had accompanied the Israelites in their wanderings for forty years was now folded past. The trials and hardships of the journey were ended. Caanan was possessed, and the enemies of Israel subdued on every hand. Peace was now established throughout the land, happiness beamed in every eye, and thankfulness thrilled every heart. "Over all the Holy Land there rested a blissful serenity, the calm which follows when successful war is crowned with conquest,—a calm which was only stirred by the proud joy of possession, and then hallowed and intensified again by the sense of Jehovah's favor." Only one thing remained to consummate the glory of the commonwealth,—the completion of the temple, and its dedication to the worship of Jehovah. Many years before this, King David had purposed in his heart to build a house for the Lord God of Israel, in Jerusalem. "Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up unto my bed; I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids, until I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob." But although the intention was approved, the honor was reserved for Solomon. "Thou shalt not build Me an house to dwell in," said the prophet to the king, "but it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go to thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons. He shall build Me an house, and I will establish his throne forever." The time had

now arrived for the fulfilment of the promise. After seven years had been spent in building the sacred edifice, it now stood forth, the grandest and costliest of earthly temples ever seen by the eye of man!

Conceive, if you can, the gorgeous spectacle that presented itself to the congregation of Israel. The elders have brought up the ark of the covenant, accompanied with innumerable sacrifices and burnt offerings, for its permanent location in the temple, under the wings of the cherubim and in the most holy place. The priests and Levites, specially sanctified for the work before them, and the singers of the congregation, arrayed in white linen, having cymbals and psalteries and harps, stand at the east end of the altar, and with them one hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets. And now as the procession passes on, high above the noise of musical instruments, is heard the song of praise, "The Lord is good : His mercy endureth forever," while in token of God's acceptance of the offered worship we are told the house was filled "with the glory of the Lord." What that glory must have been we can but faintly conceive. The effect upon the assembled congregation was so awful that the priests were unable to continue their ministrations. So overwhelming was the impression, and so universal and real the feeling that the Lord was there, that the services were for a time suspended. The priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud. This cloud was the visible manifestation of Him who dwells in light inaccessible and full of glory. In this way he took possession of the building erected for His worship and declared His willingness to dwell among them, accepting their gifts and imparting His blessings.

And now the king, arrayed in becoming vestments, stands before the altar of the Lord, and having blessed the congregation, spreads forth his hands in prayer. Like a father in the midst of his family—for a time laying aside his kingly authority and rule—

he dedicates the temple, and the people of Israel, to the service of Jehovah. He speaks of God's goodness to his father David, in having permitted him to gather the materials for the building, now so happily completed, and supplicates the favor of heaven upon the nation, in all its varied circumstances and future emergencies. The prayer ended, the fire comes down, the burnt offerings and sacrifices are consumed, the glory of the Lord once again fills the house, while the entire congregation bow their faces to the ground and worship, saying, "The Lord is good ; His mercy endureth for ever." Truly, the grandeur and solemnity of such a scene exceeds all descriptive power.

Each pillar of the temple rang,
The trumpets sounded loud and keen,
And while the minstrels sang and play'd
The mystic cloud of glory fell,
That shadowy light, that splendid shade,
In which Jehovah pleas'd to dwell.

The king cast off his crown of pride,
And bent him to the ground,
And priest and warrior, side by side,
Knelt humbly all around.

Deep awe fell down on every soul,
Since God was present there,
And not the slightest breathing stole
Upon the stilly air.

They bow'd them on the spacious floor,
With heaven-averted eye,
And blessed His name who deign'd to pour
His presence from on high.

Now what was the prevailing thought in the mind of Solomon on this grand and solemn occasion ? Was he intoxicated with pride on account of his position ? Did he say, as did the foolish King of Babylon when he walked in his palace, " Is this not great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the

might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" There was much fitted to call forth other feelings than those of humility. There was much to dazzle the eye and create a feeling of personal satisfaction, as he looked at the magnitude of the building, the grandeur of its fittings, and the vast congregation of devoted subjects that stood reverently before him. But far different were his feelings. The temple was after all but the outward shrine—a goodly house indeed, but nothing more, unless filled by the presence of the Lord. He felt that "Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it," and under this solemn impression his great anxiety was, that in keeping with the outward grandeur, and in the presence of this vast congregation, God's power and glory should be so signally manifested as to leave no room for doubt that the labor of his hand was accepted. "But will God in very deed dwell with men on earth? behold heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this house which I have built." The words do not imply any doubt that God would meet with His people and hallow their fellowship, but the more he thought of such condescension, on the part of the Infinite, the more he was amazed. Like David, when he contemplated the glory of the starry heavens, and the insignificance of the creature, he felt, "Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him!"

The promised presence of the Almighty was not exclusively given to the worship of the temple. Long before, when Moses was instructed to erect the tabernacle, God said: "Let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them, and there will I meet with thee and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat;" and when the tabernacle was completed, "the cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle, so that Moses was not able to enter into the tent, because of the cloud that abode thereon," and this cloud by day, and

fire by night, remained in the sight of all Israel, throughout their journeyings to the promised land. To us also, as to Moses and Solomon, God's presence is pledged in all the ordinances of His house. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Now, when we build and dedicate churches for the worship of Jehovah, our chief anxiety should be that God's presence should be felt in every service. It is praiseworthy and commendable that the highest style of art should be displayed and the greatest comfort obtained. But this may easily be attained without spiritual success. Crowded congregations may assemble, and eloquent sermons be preached, and much outward enthusiasm be manifested, but all is in vain, unless God condescends to dwell with His worshipping people. Our prayer should ever be, "Will God in very deed dwell with men on earth?"

When we speak of God's presence in His earthly temples, what is meant? Not, of course, that he is visible to the senses, nor that by any priestly incantation, the elements of the sacramental table can be changed into his real person. Not that any form of ritualism or swinging of incense laden censers, or outward display of material excellence, can bring the Deity into loving contact with human souls. Such methods have been, and are still, resorted to in order to produce a sort of mystical, unintelligent, and dreamy consciousness of a present God, but all in vain. It is not thus that Jehovah is to be apprehended. It is not thus that the house of God becomes the gate of heaven, or that we are permitted to wrestle with the Angel of the Covenant. Just 'in so far as we rise upon the wings of faith, above and beyond the mere outward surroundings of the sanctuary—beyond the symbol to the thing symbolized, beyond the Word that is read and preached, to Him who is the Word itself; beyond ordinances and sacraments, to Him who is the life

and vital source of all christian worship—shall we realize God's presence in His temple, and within our souls.

In different points of view it is true that God dwells with men. He is infinite. His presence is everywhere and illimitable. The heaven of heavens cannot contain Him. Everything in nature calls up His nearness and constant superintendence. His voice is in the thunder and His glance in the lightning. In the cedars as they sway under the fury of the tempest, and the breath which moves the tender leaf, we hear the whispers of His presence. It is no marvel that feelings of reverence possess the soul when standing under the lofty domes of venerable cathedrals, and that sensitive natures should be filled with dread, in view of the solemn associations and mute symbols of such a place. But none the less should reverential awe occupy the mind, when in the great outer temple of nature we gaze upon altars and symbols and paintings, “untouched by human fingers, and closely linked in association with the hand and mind of God.”

But in a higher sense than in nature God is near to His children, and most intimately associated with their lives and conduct. “Thus saith the high and lofty one, that inheriteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” The relation of parent to child is very different from that which he bears to the world at large. There may be pity and good will in the one case, but there is undying affection and tender compassion in the other. In this way we may in some faint measure understand how God dwells with His people, just as intimately and as really as when He was upon the earth and held loving intercourse with the sisters at Bethany. No one doubts for a moment the fact of the incarnation : that God in very deed became man, that He was made flesh and dwelt among men, that He took part in all that vitally affected

humanity, that He was not only seen upon earth, but His voice heard and His power manifested in the working of stupendous miracles that compelled the most sceptical to confess that He was the Son of God. Nor is He less really with His people now. He has long since left this world, but by His spirit He dwells among men. Before His exaltation to His Father's right hand, He promised to give higher manifestations of His presence than were possible to His fleshly nature. "The Comforter," He says, "shall abide with you forever." "He dwelleth with you and shall be in you." "Where two or three are gathered in My name, there am I in their midst to bless them."

Nay, God's presence with His Church is made the subject of special promise. As the Temple upon Mount Zion was the meeting place of Jehovah and His covenant people, so the Church upon earth is the trysting place of the believing soul, where sweet communion and foretastes of better things to come are enjoyed. "The Lord hath chosen Zion," says David, "He hath desired it for His habitation. This is my rest forever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it." "This is the hill which God desireth to dwell in. Yea, the Lord will dwell in it forever." Far better things were promised the second temple, after the return from captivity, than characterized the first, and far more glorious privileges are now associated with the church of the new dispensation than appertained to the old. When the Jews, broken-hearted and dispirited, returned from Babylon, they wept when they saw their beautiful house in ruins, and the walls of Jerusalem laid in the dust. But the prophet cheered them with the announcement of the Saviour's advent, saying, "I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with my glory, saith the Lord of Hosts." This glory, arising from God's presence with His church, is ours to-day as much as theirs. Both these temples have passed away, but the temple of the living God never perishes. In architectural

beauty our churches may come far short of Solomon's beautiful house. In decoration and ceremonial display, in the gold and silver that adorned the altar, we may not claim for them equality, but in all that constitutes the essentials of true and acceptable worship, have we not the pre-eminence? The cloud oftentimes obscured the altar from the sight of the congregation of Israel, but no cloud, save that which arises from unbelief, obscures our view of Christ. The Jews might enter the inner temple, but no farther. The priests might enter the holy place from time to time, but no farther. The high priest only, and he but once a year, might enter the holiest of all. The responses of the sacred oracle were only given occasionally, and regarding the more important matters of the theocracy, and the answers by Urim and Thummim were only for those of royal rank. But no such hindrances prevent the access of the humblest soul into the presence of its Maker. Directly and without the aid of priestly intercession, we can plead our case at the bar of heaven, and through the advocacy of Jesus Christ rely upon gracious pardon. "We have access with boldness into the holiest of all, through the precious blood of Christ."

The doctrine under discussion—Christ's continued presence with His church—should

(a) Be a source of joy to believers. When the disciples saw the Lord, after the resurrection, they were glad. They were previously cast down. There was a sadness in their fellowship, and a heaviness in their conversation, which nothing could remove save the knowledge that the Lord was risen indeed. But just as soon as they heard his voice again they resumed their natural cheerfulness. Their fears and doubts all fled, and confidence resumed possession of their hearts. It should be so with us in all the devotions of the sanctuary. How cold and unprofitable the ordinances of God's house when the Master of assemblies is absent! How unavailing the best efforts of the preacher! How barren the results! To

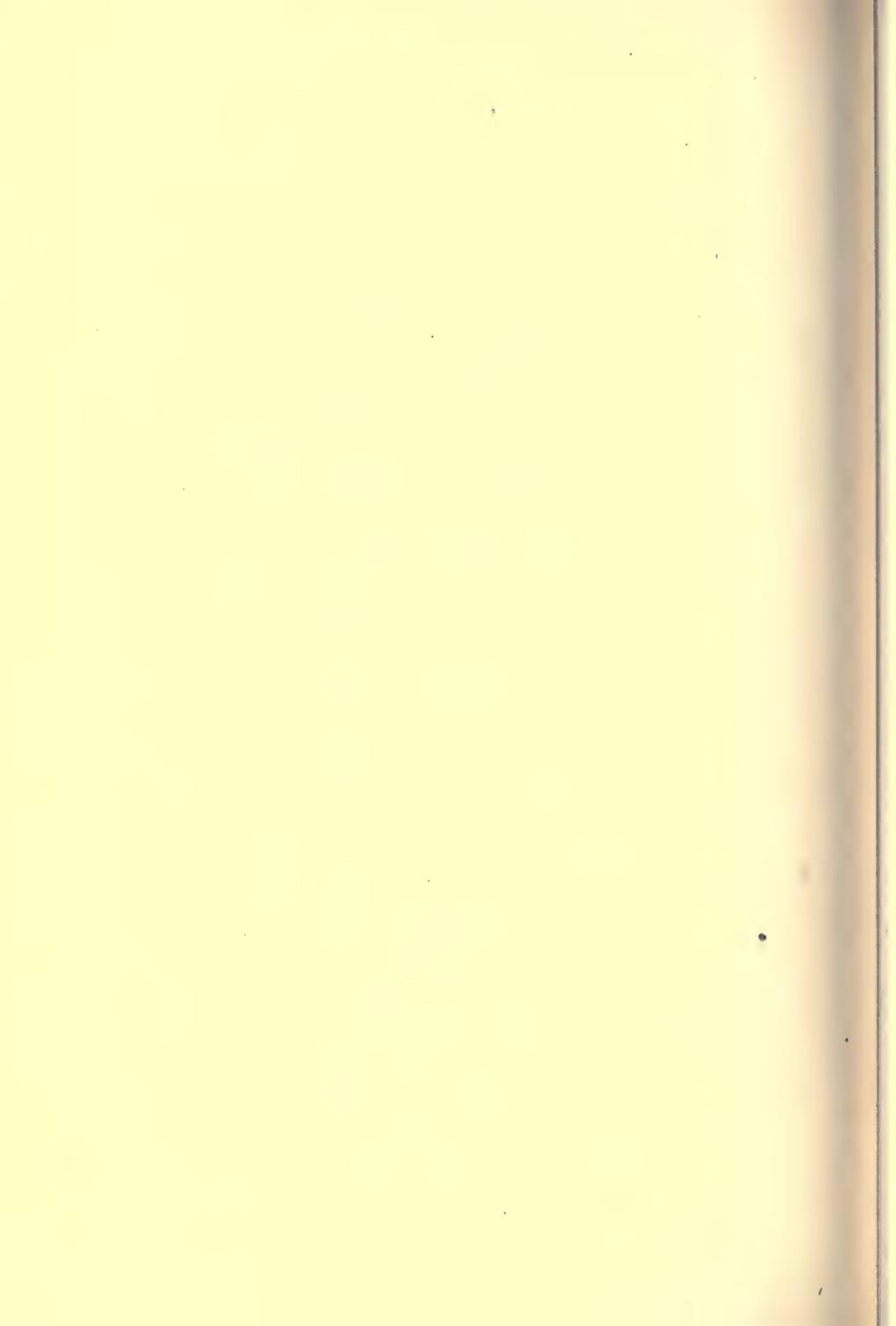
labor in holy things, without the consciousness of divine aid, is the most irksome drudgery to which any human being can be called. But the presence of Christ changes all this. The countenance becomes suffused with joy, smiles take the place of tears, and sorrow gives way to abounding gratitude, the earthly sanctuary becomes the most delightful spot on earth, because the place above all others where Jesus reveals the shinings of His face.

(b) This doctrine also insures the success of the church in every conflict. It is still, "not by might, nor by power, but by the spirit of the Lord." The marvellous revivals of Pentecost and subsequent periods, were all due to God's dwelling in His church. No voice but one could raise the dead Lazarus to life, and no voice but that of the Son of God can call dead sinners to repentance. The lamentations of christians over impenitent souls are due to the spirit of worldliness that possesses the church and precludes His saving presence. But final victory is assured. "The Lord reigns. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved." "No weapon that is formed against her can prosper, and every tongue that shall rise up in judgment against her shall be condemned." "I, saith the Lord, shall be unto her a wall of fire round about, and the glory in the midst of her." In view of such promises we can hopefully anticipate the universal spread of the true religion, when the apocalyptic vision shall be realized. "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God shall be with them and be their God."

Brethren, need I add that in order to Christ's continued presence with His visible church, he must dwell in the hearts of the members. Isolated from each and every other creature, the individual soul must seek and cherish the indwelling of the spirit. It is the presence of the Most High in the individual worshippers that consecrates the temple. Thus dwelling with Him now we have assurance of sitting with Him on His throne, in the upper kingdom

of his glory. While in the body, our communion cannot be so satisfying as when perfected humanity engages in the sinless service of heaven. "It cannot be with us in the tabernacle as it will be in the house." "Sense is slow to lean on aught else but that which it sees." But God's presence, if not so immediate, may be as real, and of the same nature, as we shall enter upon when the fleshly vestment no longer keeps the soul apart, from face to face vision of the King. Every soul, in living and loving communion with God, now brings heaven and earth so much the nearer to each other, and of every church whose members are hidden in the secret of the tabernacle, it may be said, "Surely the Lord is in this place. This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Spirits freed and spirits fettered mingle in the common atmosphere of praise.





—THE—

Indestructible Kingdom.

“ And in the days of these kings, shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”

—Daniel 2, v. 44.

The Indestructible Kingdom.



VAST amount of learned ingenuity and scholarly research have been expended on the book of Daniel. Eminent saints of God, desirous of understanding the signs of the times, and forecasting coming events in the history of the world and the church, have devoted much time to a solution of its spiritual meaning. As large a number, perhaps out of mere curiosity, have endeavored to interpret its prophecies and fix with certainty the time of the end. As in all such cases, where men presume unduly to search out the secret things of God, but little satisfactory results have been reached in regard to mere details. All are, however, agreed on one point, that Christ's church and kingdom shall survive all ecclesiastical and national convulsions, and that the vast changes which are now transpiring throughout the world are but the precursors of a glorious end, when the kingdoms of this world shall have become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, and He shall reign for ever.

It is this fact that is brought before us in the text. Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon, has dreamed a dream, which greatly disturbs his peace of mind. The wise men of the kingdom, who

professed by the aid of their gods to interpret dreams and foretell coming events, are called upon to shew its meaning, and allay the king's anxiety. A serious difficulty, however, existed, from the fact that while the king retained a sort of hazy recollection of the dream, he could not recall it in so many words. "The dream had gone from him," so that he required of the wise men, not only the interpretation of the dream, but the dream itself. Such an unlooked-for and unreasonable request staggered the Chaldean soothsayers. "There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king's matter, therefore there is no king, lord nor ruler, that asketh such things at any magician or astrologer, or Chaldean. It is a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other than can shew it before the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh." In this dilemma, when a decree had gone forth, consigning all the wise men of Babylon to death, Daniel boldly presumes to show the king the dream and its interpretation. Having spread the matter before his God, and received a favorable answer, Daniel is ushered into the presence of the king and explains the meaning of the dream. "The secret which the king hath demanded, the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers, cannot shew unto the king, but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets and maketh known to the King Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days."

It is not our present intention to discuss the detailed interpretation of the dream. The barest outline must suffice. The king beheld a great image, whose brightness was excellent, and whose form was terrible. Its head was of fine gold, its breast and arms of silver, its thighs of brass, its legs of iron, and its feet partly iron and partly clay. Suddenly a stone, cut out of the mountain without hands, smote the image, until the iron and clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, became like chaff of the threshing floors. The wind carried them away, and no place was found for them, while

the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. The interpretation is briefly as follows : The King of Babylon is the head of gold. "Thou, O king, art a king of kings, for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power and strength and glory ; thou art this head of gold." The kingdom represented by the breast and arms of silver, is that of the Medo-Persian, founded by Cyrus at the conquest of Babylon. The kingdom represented by the brass is the Macedonian empire, founded by Alexander the Great, on the ruins of the Persian monarchy ; and the fourth kingdom, represented by the legs of iron, and the feet partly clay and partly iron, refers to the Roman power, distinguished for its strength and insatiable desire for dominion, which made it for a time the mistress of the world ; until internal dissensions broke it into pieces, and hastened its downfall. Now says Daniel : "In the days of these kings, a kingdom shall be established, that shall never pass away." Before the last of these monarchs have died a new kingdom, differing in its origin and purpose, shall be set up, that shall never be destroyed ;—a kingdom whose conquests shall not be achieved by the sword : that shall enter into no alliances with earthly kingdoms, but shall prevail over and absorb all temporal powers, until alone it embraces the world and commands the homage of all intelligent beings. The kingdom indicated by Daniel, in its rise, progress and final glorious issue, is that kingdom which Christ founded—which is composed of all true believers, and which we usually term the church of the living God. Not any one sect or denomination, but the Catholic Church, embracing all in every visible organization who acknowledge Christ's supremacy, as king and head. No one body of believers dare arrogate to itself all the virtues and holiness of the communion of saints. From all churches, and out of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues, the multitude of the redeemed shall be gathered, until finally there shall be but one fold and one shepherd.

I. Let us consider the origin of this kingdom. That it is divine and not the product of human wisdom, is distinctly declared. "The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom." Whatever difference of opinion exists regarding the kingdoms referred to in the image, there can be none regarding this one. Elsewhere in this same prophecy it is stated "that one like unto the son of man came with the clouds of heaven ; and there was given him an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and a kingdom which shall not be destroyed." Now, whether we take the expression "kingdom of heaven" to mean the true church of God, embracing all believers, which shall be merged in the kingdom of glory, or the kingdom of grace in the hearts of individual believers, in both cases it is true that in its inception, progress and results, the work belongs to God alone. It is divine in its origin because due to the purpose of God in a past eternity, who determined to found an empire in this world, whose citizens should be saints and whose fellowship should be heavenly. The terms of entrance to this kingdom are declared to be not earthly honors, nor worldly renown, nor wealth nor intellectual greatness, but faith in the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ and obedience to His authority. His kingdom was announced contemporary with the creation and fall of man. It was the theme of prophecy and the song of inspired minstrelsy in the long twilight of the Jewish dispensation, ere Christ came into the world and gave it form and reality in the eyes of men. In other words, God purposed from eternity to save by the death of His Son a multitude of the human family, over whom Christ should exercise a special oversight—towards whom he should stand in a special relationship, and for whom there should be reserved special honors. Upon the ruins of the fall this kingdom was to rise ; through the long ages of conflict and blood, subsequent to the entrance of sin into our world, and prior to the universal spread of holiness, this kingdom was to increase and spread in power and influence, until

a new heavens and a new earth should appear, and the new Jerusalem come down from God as a bride adorned for her husband.

Men acquire kingdoms by conquest or purchase, by political convulsions or diplomatic alliances, but the kingdom of God was founded by the shedding of precious blood. "I appoint unto you a kingdom," said Christ to his disciples at the passover table, and straightway prepared to pass through those terrible agonies that culminated in the cross of Calvary. There amid rending rocks and darkening heavens the Saviour died, and dying passed away to his mediatorial throne on high. But from that cross and grave a religion sprang forth, destined to outlive all forms of worship and flourish throughout ages in immortal youth.

II. Consider the indestructibility of this kingdom. "It shall never be destroyed." We should expect this when we reflect upon its origin, and the purpose for which it is founded. Unless superior to the conspiracies of open foes and the treachery of professed friends, it could not accomplish the will of heaven. That it should have to pass through many fiery ordeals, and at times seem all but crushed, is implied in the language of the text. And such has been the history of the church of God, from its beginning in Eden, down through patriarchal and apostolic ages to the present. Idolatry has endeavored to suppress and conceal its simple faith ; civil despots have attempted, by force of law, to shake its foundations ; paganism has essayed to defile its purity ; scepticism and infidelity, by repeated and violent assaults from age to age, have vainly sought to give to human reason the royal honors of Jehovah. But all have failed. To-day the church of God stands forth before the nations of the earth, stronger and fairer than ever—with no scars upon her brow, and no traces of the conflict upon her form. Men who make no professions to faith in Christ's divinity, secular philosophers and rationalists, weary of fruitless endeavors to undermine this kingdom, now begin to sing the praises of Zion's King. On

many a well fought battle-field, Christianity has not only vindicated her claims, but laid prostrate heaps upon heaps, the powers of darkness. Alone of all systems of religion, that during the past 1900 years have presumed to bless humanity, she remains to-day with strength undiminished and veracity unimpeached ; and just in proportion as the nations of the earth have adopted the principles of this kingdom, have they flourished or decayed. Based upon the dictates of mere expediency, they have gone down in the day of trial, and sunk amid the wild tumults of human passion, like vessels in a storm. Where to-day do you find true manhood, inflexible integrity, impartial laws and stable government ? Not in Turkey and other portions of the East, where Mohammedanism prevails and poisons the fountain head of social purity ; not in Spain or Italy or Austria, or even sunny France ; not in India, with its Buddhism, or China, with its curious medley of diverse creeds, where until recently, the air was foul with the smoke of altars, consuming human sacrifices to unknown divinities ;—no, not in these, but in our own loved land—in Britain and her colonies, and in the neighboring republic, nations conservative of what is true, and progressive in what is good.

III. Consider the immutability of this kingdom. “The kingdom shall not be left to other people.” The throne shall never surrender to other powers, nor the sceptre pass into other hands. Reference is doubtless made to the fate of other kingdoms, then or subsequently existing, whose sovereigns were deposed, and whose liberties were crushed by the usurper. The Babylonian princes yielded to Cyrus the Persian ; the Persian power to Alexander the Macedonian ; and that again to the Romans, and so it has been with many kingdoms during the Christian era. The map of Europe, by the absorption of territory, and the snatching of empire by the avaricious despots, has again and again been changed, and new boundaries affixed. The strong have swallowed up the weak, and

kingdoms once famous in history, have all but perished from the memory. But in the kingdom of which we speak, no such transference of power can ever happen. The administration is perpetual, and the laws unchangeable. Of no other kingdom indeed, can this be said. The most stable thrones have a succession of kings, for death as it changed the high priest of old, changes the occupants of earthly thrones. But the King of Zion rules for ever, of His government there is no end. Calm and unmoved by the overturnings of the nations, and the revolutions of society, He sits in majesty, controlling their destinies, and making all contribute to the glory of His name. None may presume to dethrone Him, or call in question His supremacy. "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

IV. And finally, consider the glorious triumph of this kingdom. "It shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." The kingdom shall not only never be destroyed itself, but it shall silently, but effectively, attack other kingdoms, until alone it fills the whole world. The language, though plainly indicating victory after conflict, does not necessarily imply that violent measures are to be resorted to, in the conquest of heathendom. We know from other portions of scripture, that it is by the gentle, persuasive influences of the Holy Spirit that the church of the living God is to extend her boundaries. The little stone cut out of the mountain—small and insignificant at first, compared with the gigantic systems of paganism—gradually increases in magnitude and strength, until it subdues all other powers, and

brings despotic thrones to dust ; such has been the method adopted from the advent of the Saviour to the present day. Christ's kingdom has never sought the shelter of royalty, nor the force of arms, in order to spread its principles or conserve its liberties. It seeks no favor, it goes forth in confident reliance upon the inherent force of truth over error, when accompanied by the Divine Spirit. Its weapons are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds, and everything that exalteth itself against the faith. The legend that represents Constantine as seeing a glittering cross in the heavens, and above it the inscription, " By this we conquer," is the motto of Christ's kingdom to the end of time.

We need to have just such a promise of ultimate victory to sustain us in the conflict we are called to wage with the powers of darkness. We walk too much by sight and too little by faith, when studying the progress of Christ's kingdom. We are apt to be disengaged by what seem repulses and defeats, but which are really onward movements and mighty impulses. Long periods of time are demanded ere the temple is completed and the corner stone laid amid rejoicings. But eventually the heathen shall be given to the Saviour for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession.

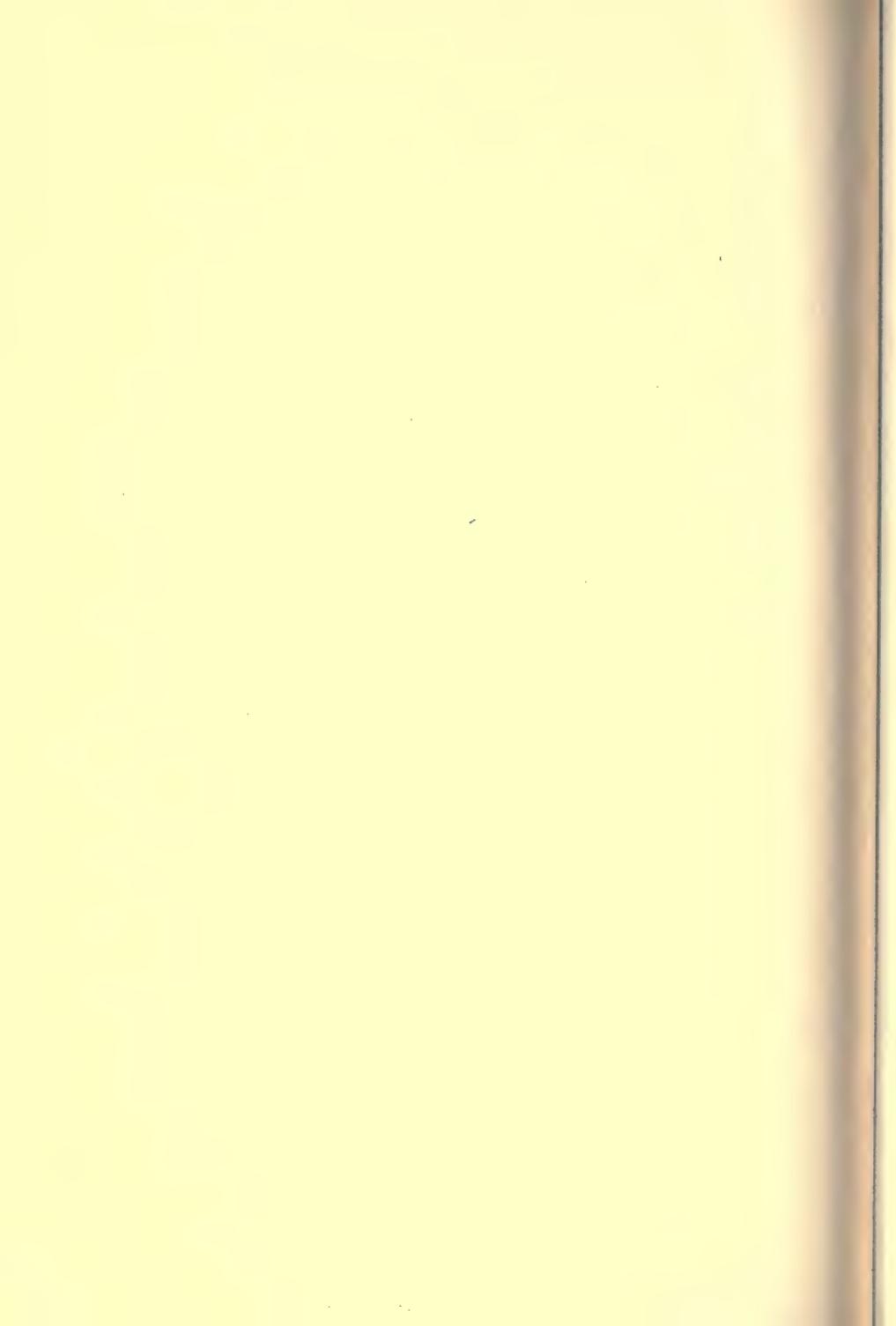
In churches multiplied and scattered all over the world, and the growth of other religious agencies, we see direct evidence of the spread of Christ's kingdom. But in society at large, not less surely are the principles of righteousness at work correcting abuses, mellowing animosities, purifying literature, abolishing slavery, extending charity and good will to men, and advancing with civilization in the subjugation of barbarous tribes, until the entire earth is opened up to christian commerce. What vast changes are yet in the future when this kingdom shall be universal, it is not within the power of human language to describe, or imagination to conceive. Then the golden age, so long sung of by poets, shall be realized.

and our long sin-trodden and accursed world be restored to the bright sisterhood of sinless orbs, shall become best and brightest of all, because the dwelling place of the world's Redeemer. For in the language of the well known hymn :

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journeys run,
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

One question of a personal character remains. Do we belong to this kingdom? Have we been translated into the kingdom of God's own dear son? Have we received that kingdom which shall never be moved? Are we rich in faith, and heirs of that kingdom which God hath promised to them that love Him? Are we assured that, delivered from every evil work, we shall be presented to this kingdom, and at last when our work on earth is done, that an entrance shall be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?





Through Death to Life.

“I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

—Galatians 2, v. 20.

Through Death to Life.

HE text is an explanation of the preceding verse, where Paul says, "that through the law he has become dead to the law, that he might live unto God." To be dead to the law is to be free from its dominion. The law is represented in scripture as an hard and cruel taskmaster. Sinners are in the position of slaves, under the control and subject to the command of this master. This relation continues during the life of the slave, only ending at death, when "he hears not the voice of the oppressor and the servant is free from his master." Paul was once thus in bondage to the law, but was now set free. Its rites and ceremonies were no longer binding upon his conscience, nor had its condemning sentence any longer influence over his heart and life. Furthermore, the law itself had occasioned this deadness to the law. It so accused and terrified him, when a guilty sinner, by its woes and threatenings as to drive him to Christ, who by his death has fully met all the demands of violated justice, and freed the sinner from its obligations. But this experience or state is not a final one in the history of the awakened sinner. It is but

a means to an end, preparatory to entrance upon a nobler life, "that he might live unto God." Then follows the language of the text: "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

"I am crucified with Christ." The language is strange and striking. Is it mere paradox or metaphor? Is there really such a change in the views, experience and conversation of the converted man, that calls for such language to describe it? Christ, says an old writer, was crucified between two malefactors. Paul was not one of them. He was at the feet of Gamaliel, not at the foot of the cross on Mount Calvary. Had he been there, he would rather have helped to crucify him, than yielded to be crucified with him. How, then, are we to explain such language?

Cross-bearing, according to the Saviour's words, is an inevitable mark of discipleship. "He that taketh not up his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." From the earliest days of christianity to the present time, cross-bearing implies the possession of all those noble qualities that constitute men heroes in the church and in the world. To bear the cross is not simply to profess Christ, but to do so, if need be, in the face of superhuman obstacles. Everything that militates against undivided allegiance must be cheerfully surrendered, and every form of persecution willingly endured. Right hands must be cut off, and right eyes plucked out; father and mother, wife and children, brethren and sisters, houses and lands, nay, even life itself be freely given up, in order to bear the cross. But even all this is not the worst form of cross-bearing. Cross-bearing before the world is comparatively easy; but cross-bearing in the secret domain of a man's own heart is much more difficult. Many a man who would cheerfully bear the cross in the sight of his fellow-men, has utterly failed in what seem the insig-

nificant details of life. The curbing of the passions—the restraining of unlawful appetites—the ruling of the temper and the sacrificing of self interest for the good of our fellow men :—in a word, the bringing of the whole man, body, soul and spirit, intellectual pursuits, emotional delights and imaginative pleasures, into harmony and concurrence with a living christianity—this is what is meant by cross-bearing in the enlarged sense of the word.

To bear the cross now is a very different thing from what it was in the days of Christ and the apostles. Even in our own day circumstances lessen or augment the pain of cross-bearing. But to bear the cross in the scriptural sense of the expression is at all times in opposition to the natural heart. The very selection of such a figure by Christ and the apostles proves this much. Crucifixion was a Roman, not a Jewish form of punishment. Before the time of Christ it had no moral significance whatever. Crucifixion was regarded as the most disgraceful form of capital punishment, reserved for criminals of the blackest dye. What it was to symbolize in the christian economy, was learned first, and most conspicuously in the example of Christ, and afterwards in the illustrious lives and heroic deaths of such men as Paul, and the noble army of martyrs, who went through Gethsemanes of suffering and Golgothas of blood for the love they bore to the truth. “Christ changed the cross from the lowest of things to one that is higher now than the sword or the pen ; the morning kisses it upon the cathedral spire, and farewell glitters upon it as the sun departs.”

Cross-bearing is thus but an initiatory step in entering Christ's kingdom. Christ not only carried the cross, but was crucified upon it. It was not the simple act of bearing the cross, nor the magnanimity displayed and suffering endured on the way to Calvary, that purchased the redemption of the world. It was not the solitariness of Gethsemane, nor the bloody sweat of the garden, nor the heart

rending cry that escaped his lips, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" that made atonement for sin, but the tragedy of Calvary when, amid the convulsions of nature, the darkening of the sun, the quaking of the earth, the rending of the rocks, and the opening of the graves, the Saviour exclaimed, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost. Then it was that salvation was completed and the sting of sin extracted.

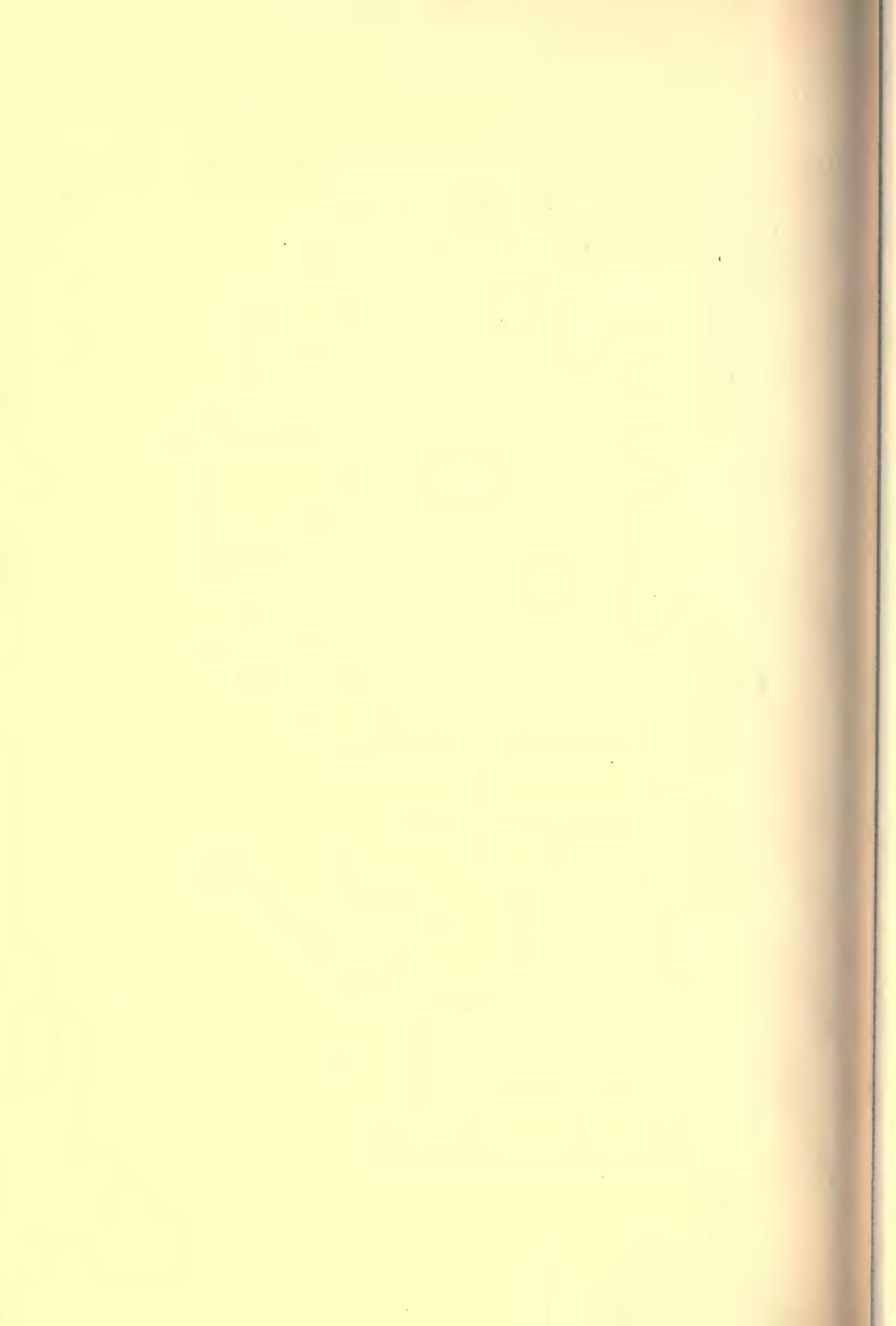
Crucifixion was a lingering death and exposed its victim to the most excruciating mortal agony. Death on the scaffold, or at the cannon's mouth, or by the guillotine—sudden death in any shape or form whatever was preferable to that of crucifixion. And so it is in the mortifying of the flesh with its affections and lusts. Conversion may be the act of a moment, but thorough sanctification demands a life time for its accomplishment. Religion has its joys, but in many cases these are incidental. The pain precedes the pleasure—the battle goes before the victory—the cross before the crown. We are not to imagine that at the moment of conversion a life of ease and respite from suffering is to be entered upon. As the patient screams in mortal pain under the surgeon's knife, so is it in the process of spiritual crucifixion.

Let me now specify a few things implied in being crucified with Christ.

First.—There is a cheerful giving up of everything that hinders the possession of the highest spiritual attainments. The love of the world—the fondness with which we cling to material good—is a great drawback to christian progress. Position, power, riches, the applause of men, and the tangible objects of the present life, are all in all to unconverted men. And is it not lamentably true, that such seems too often the case, even with the children of God? But when invisible realities are revealed to the spiritual gaze, and glory, honor and immortality are apprehended as the inheritance



The Crucifixion.



of the saints in light, there is no hardship felt in making the greatest of earthly sacrifices.

Secondly,—There is a willing obedience to the divine commands. In this the disciple must imitate his Master. “Not my will but thine be done,” is the watchword of the christian life. There should be no reluctance in the performance of duty, and no hesitation in going forward to the severest trials. “Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth,” should be the christian’s invariable response. A man who lives the life of Paul, and possesses in any measure his faith, will not be continually talking about his services and sacrifices. True religion demands not simply obedience, but a cheerful obedience. The strength of our love is measured by our readiness to suffer, and all that we can do for Christ in the most trying emergencies of life, is nothing compared with what He has done for us, in saving us from eternal ruin, and purchasing for us eternal blessings.

Thirdly,—There is a marked and increasing deadness to the world. “I am crucified,” says Paul. Interest in the events of the present life henceforth to a great extent ceases. The lifeless body feels nothing, hears nothing, sees nothing of what is going on around it. And such in point of fact is actually the case with the regenerated soul. Not that henceforth the child of God withdraws from society, and takes no part in the business of the world and the cares of the commonwealth; but such a revolution takes place in his feelings and desires—in the value he attaches to outward prosperity and earthly advancement, that he is in great measure indifferent to questions that are of absorbing interest in the eyes of his fellow-men.

It is thus, in one aspect of the case, no easy thing to be a christian after the pattern of the Apostle Paul. But this is the darkest side of the picture. Christ Jesus by his death has purchased for the believer, not only present blessings but future glory. Having

become obedient unto death, He has been highly exalted—a name has been given Him above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow. Who is he that sits upon the throne? John tells us, that “in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts and in the midst of the elders, stood a lamb as it had been slain.” It is the once crucified but now glorified Saviour, who now receives the adorations of the angels and the praises of the redeemed. And where are such men as Paul and the cloud of witnesses, who counted not their lives dear unto them, that they might finish their course with joy? They are now near the throne, kings and priests unto God; they sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, appareled in garments that rival the brightness and splendor of the sun. “It is a faithful saying, if we be dead with him we shall also live with him. If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him?” Beyond the cross

I look and see a throne,
Christ's throne and mine in one;
Hallelujah!
Throne and Cross for ever.

To bear the cross, then, may be bitter—to crucify the old man may be a desperate life-long struggle, but the end is sweet. Though Christ died upon the rugged summit of Mount Calvary, “yet having borne the cross, he was laid in the sepulchre, and the sepulchre was in a garden. Roses wet with the dew of the morning were round about the door of the sepulchre. It was the nodding daisies and lilies that first called Him, knocking mutely at the sepulchre's mouth; and when He came forth in glory, He came forth in the garden, with fruits and flowers on every side of Him. Christian, go with Christ to the cross, and die with Christ, that like Christ you may stand in the garden amid all fruits and flowers.”

But, says the Apostle, while “I am crucified with Christ, “nevertheless I live.” My existence is not ended, but materially changed. I am no longer what I was. Before, I lived for the world—now I

live for God. Formerly, I loved sin—now I hate it. Formerly, this body was the tabernacle of Satan—now it is the temple of the Holy Ghost. As great a change has taken place in my moral nature, as took place in my sentient existence at the moment of birth into the world. “For if any man be in Christ he is a new creature ; old things are passed away ; behold all things are become new.”

A man recovering from some painful disease, says, “I live in a new world,” and in like manner the regenerated soul exclaims, “I am crucified with Christ.” “nevertheless I live.” But, continues the Apostle, “I live, yet not I.” The paradoxes of the verse are not ended. He first tells us that he has been crucified with Christ, then again that he lives. Now again he says, “Not I.” After all, there is no real contradiction. It is evident that this clause is inserted to show the source of his new-found spiritual life. He desires nothing of the glory resulting from this wonderful change. Not by his own inherent powers or efforts after this nobler existence had he attained it. He owes all to the free sovereign grace of God.

This seemingly contradictory language is further explained when he says, “I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” In other words, the Lord Jesus Christ imparts to the believer, at the moment of conversion, of his own nature, in virtue of which he may be said to dwell in the believer’s heart. He is the author—the fountain-head of his spiritual being. This life, so abundantly stored up in the Godhead, is conveyed to all the children of God. In virtue of that union which exists between the Saviour and his people, they are one. This is not mere figurative language. The head and the members are one. The root and the branches are one. The fountain and the stream are one. The husband and wife are one. So between Christ and the believer, there is a substantial union, though a union that can only be spiritually discerned and gradually experienced in the growing sanctification of the child of God. Not

more really does the soul quicken the mortal body with life, than does Christ quicken the heart of the believer.

Paul finally explains how Christ dwells in him, and the mode of its operation. "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

Notice, among other things, that

I. This spiritual life is enjoyed by the believer upon earth. It is a life lived in the flesh—in this mortal body. A man may live spiritually in a sinful dying body. Paul does not say, "The life which I live to the flesh," but in the flesh. These two things are essentially different.

II. This life is altogether unlike that which the believer inherits by nature. A contrast is indicated—the past with the present. The old record was a melancholy one. Before, says Paul, I was dead, I thought I was alive, but now I see how great was my error. He has brought me up out of the horrible pit and out of the miry clay—a new song has been put into my mouth, even praise to God.

III. This spiritual life is a life of faith. Faith is the most wonderful power in the universe. "It has a kind of omnipotence in it—it can remove mountains, command the sun to stand still, and raise the dead." It crucifies, vivifies, purifies, justifies, glorifies. By faith the believer is united to that Saviour, who now sits upon the throne.

IV. God is the author of this life of faith. "I live by faith of the Son of God. Christ is the author and finisher—the revealer and object of this faith." Paul speaks not of material, nor intellectual, nor emotional faith, nor of the faith of devils, but of saving faith. The faith by which a believer can bear up under the trials of life, and by which he can triumphantly die, must have a divine being for its object.

V. This faith is experimental in its character. It is appropriating faith. "It is faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

You may start many difficulties connected with the plan of salvation, and puzzle the humble christian regarding many doctrines in his creed, and suggest many metaphysical contradictions connected with the exercise of faith, but you cannot take from the soul the sure knowledge and experience of the love of Christ. No argument can overturn this sure pledge of heaven's regard, "The Lord knoweth them that are His." "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulations, or distress, or persecutions, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

"He loved me," says the Apostle,—"far back in the counsels of eternity, before the heavenly bodies were placed in their appointed orbits, or goodness had decked the earth in lavish beauty,—before the angels sang the choral of creation or the advent of Christ, this Saviour loved me." Says the prophet, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." And why such a manifestation of love? Not because of merit in my character. Apart from the infinite and overflowing tenderness of the divine nature, there was no motive to prompt such an exercise of love towards the Apostle or any sinner. "He loved me," says Paul, no common sinner, but the vilest of the vile—a persecutor, an outcast, an enemy to Jesus Christ and his religion—one who gloried in his wickedness, and boasted of his cruelty. Oh! the height and the depth, the length and the breadth of this love of Christ, it passeth knowledge!

"He gave himself for me," adds the Apostle. This is the incontrovertible proof of love. "In due time Christ died for the ungodly. Scarcely for a righteous man will one die—peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were sinners Christ died for us." He gave himself. We could not purchase salvation—all must be of grace. He who was the son of God, the brightness of his Father's glory, the express image of his person, the adored of

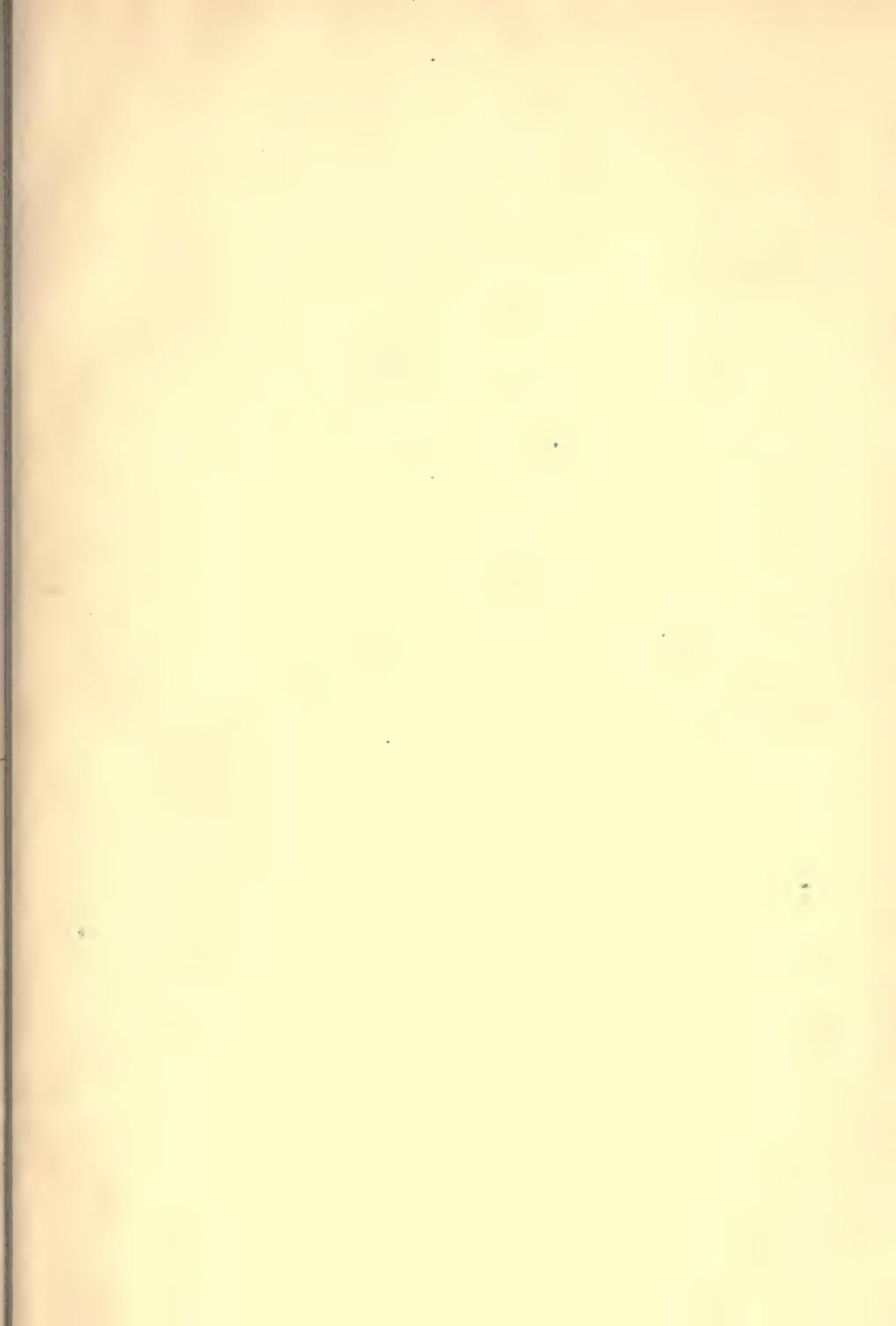
angels, and the central attraction of the heavenly world, suffered death that man might live.

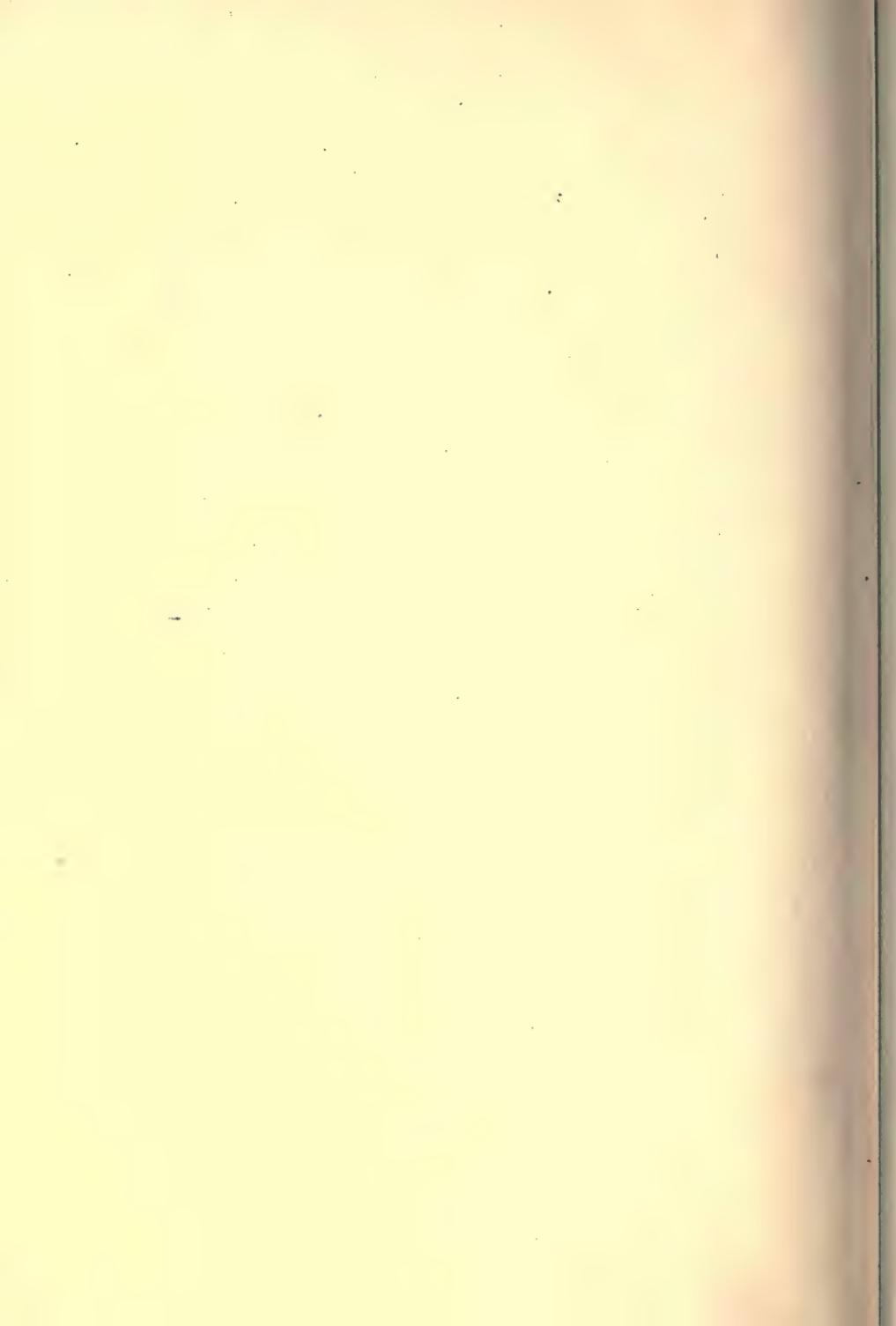
And now, by way of application, let me add: If Christ lives in us, we can never die. We can, in other words, never fall away from grace. Christ once died, and now forever lives. They that are in Christ die to sin, and forever after live to God. The benefits of Christ's death are lasting and inexhaustible. The believer can never want. The spiritual life enjoyed on earth merges into eternal life beyond the grave, and thus we can go on saying:

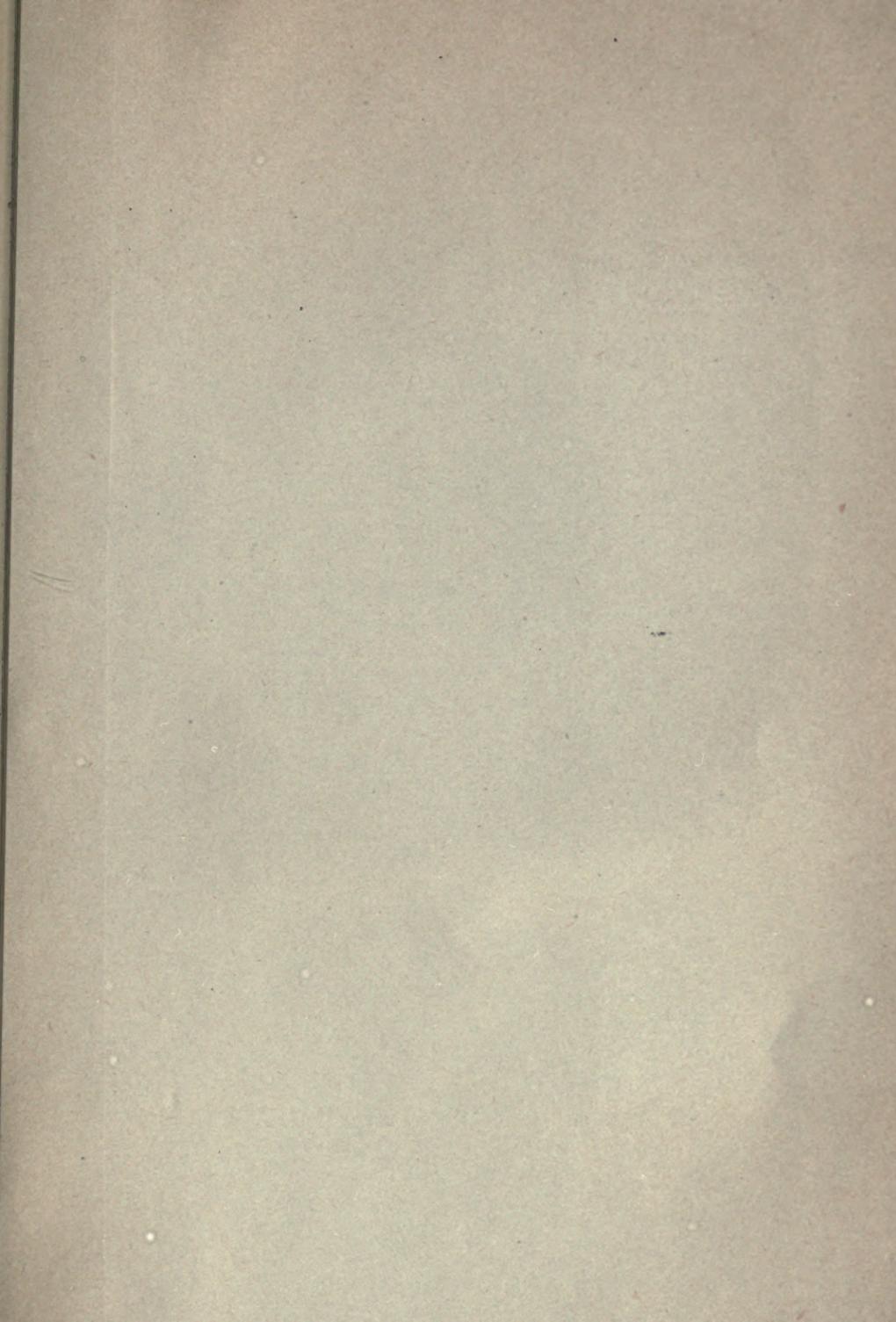
Thou art my life, O Saviour ! by faith I live on Thee ;
I was a suffering captive, but Thou hast made me free ;
I passed my life in sighing, but Thou hast made me sing ;
I was alone and lonely—Thou art my Friend and King,

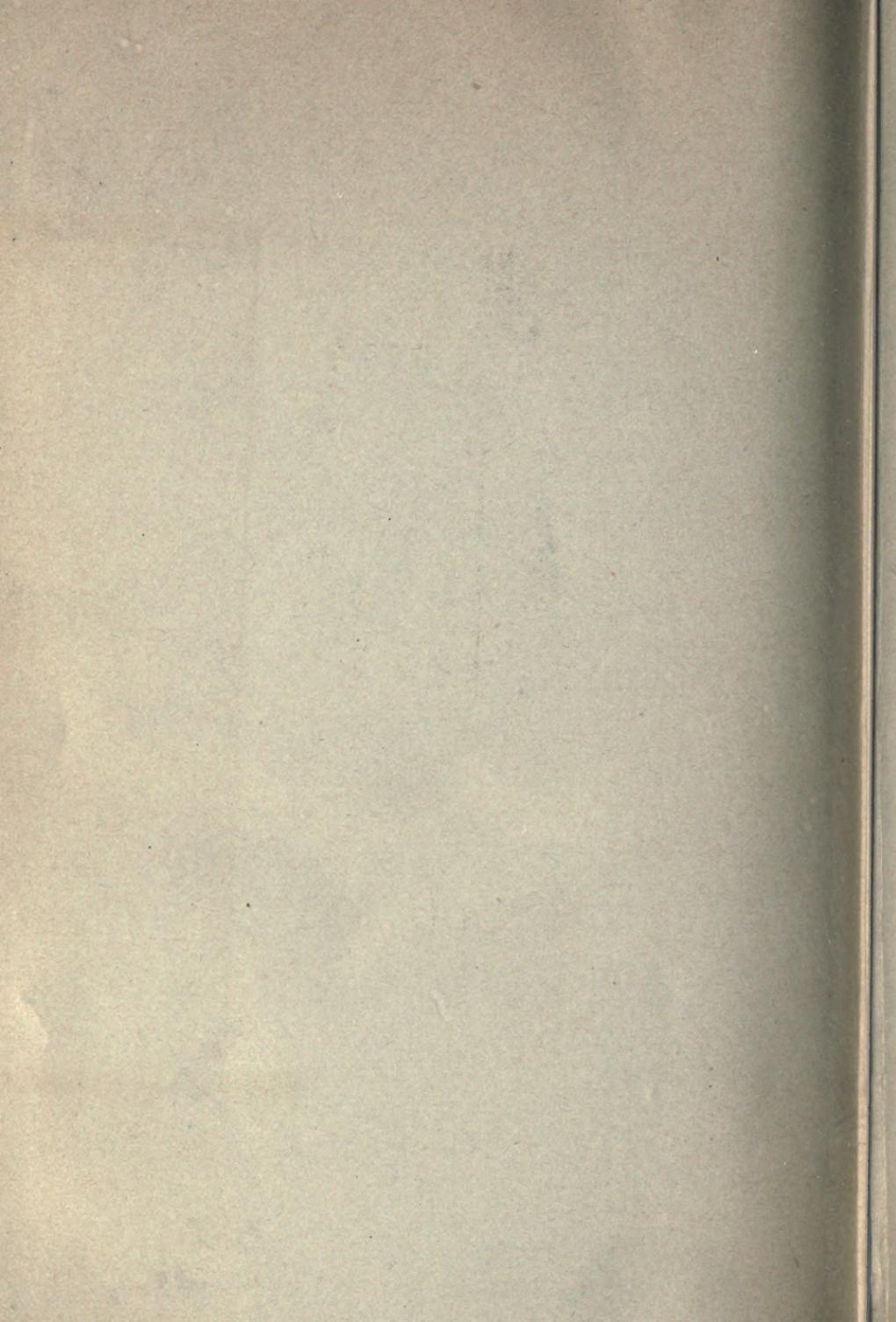
I would not fear the dangers that lie along the way,
I would not doubt or question, but only trust and pray ;
The old life left behind me, the new life I would live,
In faith on Thee, O Jesus, who canst Thy spirit give.











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